

THE First Presbyterian Church of Jersey  
City, New Jersey.

HISTORICAL DISCOURSES.

By CHARLES K. IMBRIE.



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HISTORY  
OF THE  
FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
OF  
*JERSEY CITY, NEW JERSEY.*

IN FOUR DISCOURSES PREACHED IN THE MONTH OF JULY, 1876.

ALSO

THE DISCOURSE PREACHED AT THE CLOSING OF SERVICES IN THE  
CHURCH BUILDING, SUNDAY MORNING, APRIL 29, 1888.

BY  
CHARLES K. IMBRIE,  
*Pastor of the Church.*

NEW YORK:  
ANSON D. F. RANDOLPH & COMPANY,  
38 WEST TWENTY-THIRD STREET.

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PRESS OF  
EDWARD O JENKINS' SONS,  
NEW YORK.



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## PREFACE.

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THE first four of the following discourses were preached in the First Presbyterian Church of Jersey City on successive Sabbath mornings in the month of July, 1876, in compliance with the recommendation of the General Assembly of the year 1873 (see Minutes of the General Assembly, page 490), that that month in the Centennial year of the country should be used as the occasion for presenting from the pulpit the histories of the churches in our denomination throughout the land. It was intended to publish them immediately after their delivery. But owing to circumstances, which need not be here stated, this design was postponed.

Even at that time it began to be very plain, as will be seen in the close of the fourth discourse, that, sooner or later, the church building must be removed and the congregation seek other quarters. When, at length, after twelve years of further labor it was decided to dispose of the church building, the desire was revived that these discourses should be published and be followed by the sermon preached by the pastor at the closing services held in the church just before his announcing the dissolution of the long continued pastoral relation between himself and the congregation. This sermon is the fifth in the present volume. It was judged best to print the former ones just as they were originally delivered, without pausing to correct them in reference to the changes which had occurred in the interval. A number of persons represented as living in 1876 have since deceased. These and some other changes are simply noted in the margin; and a few other notes are there added also to explain or illustrate the statements in the discourses. It may be proper to state that the corporate title of the church whose history mainly occupies the following pages has always been "The Presbyterian Church of Jersey City." But

as other Presbyterian churches have since been organized within the city, it has usually been called for the sake of convenience "The First Presbyterian Church of Jersey City." And this title is used in reference to it throughout this history.

These discourses, such as they are, are now sent forth to the many attendants upon the services held in former and in later years, in this old historic building, in the belief that they, at least, will be interested in seeing revived these scenes of the past, and in the hope that they may be prompted thereby to look forward with increased faith and hope and longing toward the coming Kingdom of God when our separations shall be at an end and we shall be forever together with the Lord.

CHAS. K. IMBRIE.

JERSEY CITY, *September 1*, 1888.

## SERMON I.

1 "So he built the house, and finished it; and covered the house with beams and boards of cedar. And then he built chambers against all the house five cubits high; and they rested on the house with timber of cedar. And the word of the LORD came to Solomon, saying, Concerning this house which thou art in building, if thou wilt walk in my statutes, and execute my judgments, and keep all my commandments to walk in them; then will I perform my word with thee, which I spake unto David thy father: And I will dwell among the children of Israel, and will not forsake my people Israel."—1 KINGS vi. 9-13.

SUCH is God's promise concerning the temple built by Solomon. Such is the condition upon which the promise to Israel rests regarding it. And such is the glory which was sure to follow the performance of the condition. In a certain and proper sense this is true of every house builded for the proclamation of the Lord's name and for the declaration of His truth and for the administration of His ordinances and the worship of His people. That sure promise, "If thou wilt walk in my statutes and keep all my commandments, I will perform my word unto thee," is for those who worship in these also. And it is this which sets such buildings apart from buildings devoted to other purposes. While they last it confers upon them a glory and an honor which renders them places of peculiar blessedness to those who are therein accustomed, from generation to generation, to meet the Lord in His ordinances. And when, in the course of time, these structures have passed away it associates these buildings with the tenderest and most precious memories.

It has been judged by our General Assembly appropriate to this Centennial year, in which our land rejoices together over the national mercies with which the century has been crowned, to devote the Sabbath before our National Anni-

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versary, for presenting the history of the several churches of our denomination. Such a record of the beginnings and progress of places devoted to God's worship is not without Scriptural warrant. Not only is the history of the rise and formation of the worshipping congregation of God's people recorded, but the very stones of memorial in the channel of the Jordan and on its banks are held in honor. With what minute detail, in the Scriptures too, has the Spirit of God honored the gradual erection of the tabernacle in the wilderness and also this very temple of Solomon. The very carved work of the sanctuary was precious (Psalm lxxiv. 6, 7). True, there were special occasions for this in these particular cases, inasmuch as God only could, of right, prescribe the forms and circumstances of His own worship. But apart from this, what minute detail is given as to the preparation and silent erection of the stones of the building, the arrangement of the chambers and other particulars of mere construction. And so precious was the very building itself that even when the foundations of the second temple were laid, as has not been deemed unworthy of record by the Spirit of God, it was not without sore weeping that the greater glories of the earlier House of the Lord rose up in their memories. Nor is it wrong to bring to remembrance the names of the men whose zeal and activity have been instrumental in God's hands for founding and building these houses of God where so many have enjoyed the holy ordinances of Christianity and had their souls nourished for heaven. It was no mean recommendation which the Jews offered to Christ in behalf of the centurion, when they said of this benevolent Gentile, "He loveth our nation and hath built us a synagogue."

Not that we need carry this to excess. Not that Christians should ever forget that we are but pilgrims and strangers here after all, and our true house of worship, as "our citizenship," is above and in the future, and that all these present places of solemn worship—the old temple, the synagogues, and the New Testament churches—just as our nations and our earthly habitations are temporary, and are

passing away to give place to the permanent house and kingdom of God in the future, whereon alone our hearts are therefore to dwell. Even of the temple Christ could say with a sort of indifference, "The time cometh when neither in this mountain nor yet at Jerusalem shall men worship the Father." And yet perhaps even in the kingdom there shall be a fond recollection of the old sites and the old tabernacles of the Lord wherein God's people have been refreshed in the wilderness; and there shall be many a sweet conversation of the saints pointing back to sacred scenes on the journey toward the place of rest. The staves which had carried the ark of the covenant during its wanderings were indeed drawn out when the ark had found a settled rest in the new temple; and yet the ends of the staves were still placed in view as a fond remembrance of God's past mercies toward His tabernacle and His people while they were still in the weary wilderness.

Let us then trace the beginnings and progress of our branch of the Church of God in this city.

The Presbyterians were among the first, if not the very first, who held regular worship in this part of what is now called Jersey City, and known at that time as "Paulus' Hoeck" (Paul's Corner). The Episcopalians are known to have held worship here nearly as early. Mr. Winfield, in his "History of Hudson County," p. 391, states that St. Matthew's Episcopal Church was organized August 21, 1808, and that Trustees were elected in December of the same year. He states also that at first the services were held in the "Jersey Academy," built by the town authorities, and completed in February, 1807. Whether the Episcopalians had services before their organization in 1808 I do not know. The Rev. Dr. Taylor also states\* that a desire was expressed by the inhabitants of Jersey City to have a Reformed Dutch Church organized in 1807. But nothing came

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\* "Annals of the Classis and Township of Bergen," by Benjamin C. Taylor, D.D., p. 343.

of this. Now, as nearly as I can make it out, for several years previous to these dates (in 1804) the Presbyterians were holding services. Mr. Stephen Seaman, son of one of the early elders in the Presbyterian Church here, and now\* living in this city, tells me that his father's family removed here from Ellis' Island in 1805. And he states distinctly that at that time the old Academy building (of which I shall speak presently) had just been finished, and that regular Presbyterian services were held in this building when his father's family took up their abode here. These services were conducted most probably by Supplies obtained from the Presbytery of New York or the Presbytery of Jersey. It must be understood, however, that at this time there was not a regular organization. These were merely assemblies for Presbyterian worship. The *organization* took place in 1809. I have in my possession a letter† in the handwriting of the late Rev. Samuel Miller, D.D., of Princeton, N. J., in which he says: "The history of the Presbyterian Church in Jersey City is short and easily told. On the 10th day of January, A.D. 1809, a Presbyterian church was organized in this city by him who now addresses you"; and he further says: "My impression is that it was the first church of *any* denomination that was *organized* in the place."‡ This marks the organization clearly. I supplement this by a reminiscence of the Rev. Dr. B. C. Taylor,§ of Bergen, who informs me that he has a distinct recollection of Dr. Miller telling him that when he came to Jersey City and organized the church, he ordained two elders. Who these elders were is not certainly known. The probability is that one of them was Mr. James Morrison, who is known to have afterward

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\* In 1876.

† An extract from a sermon preached by him at the dedication of the Presbyterian Church of Jersey City in 1845.

‡ The Episcopalians were four and a half months earlier in organization, but not in preaching services.

§ In 1876. Since deceased.



long served in that capacity. And I judge that the other was Mr. John Seaman, although his son thinks not. Mr. Stephen Seaman tells me that he is sure his father was not ordained elder of the church until some years after his arrival. But this would still allow four years to intervene; and I presume, as no other name offers, that he was the other elder whom Dr. Miller ordained. The impression of Dr. Taylor is that Dr. Miller stated to him that this organization died out. And some others also have the impression that it was extinguished. But this is evidently a mistake. Dr. Miller's own language is: "They continued worshipping in the school-house which they were occupying, if I mistake not, until about the year 1824." But in addition to this, Mr. Stephen Seaman, who has lived here ever since,\* assures me that the church's services were never discontinued, but went on until the year 1827, when the congregation had erected a building and moved into their new edifice in Grand Street—the same building which afterward passed into the possession of the Reformed Dutch Church. On the same authority we find that these services were regularly held in the same place (the Academy building), with occasional exceptions, when for one reason or another the congregation met in a private dwelling. The history then of the First Presbyterian Congregation of Jersey City was continuous and not broken up and then afterward replaced by a second organization. Beginning with stated preaching about the year 1804, it became regularly organized, accompanied by the ordination of elders, in 1809, and thence onward maintained regular worship by supplies until it was incorporated in 1825, and not very long afterward occupied its new building in Grand Street, and so continued until its transfer to the Reformed Dutch Church. It was a period of feebleness, indeed; but nevertheless of continued life for about twenty-three years.

I now return to Dr. Miller's paper. He says further:

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\* In 1876.

"What is now a populous city was then a small village, or rather an inconsiderable hamlet, and the congregation was, of course, feeble, and found some difficulty in maintaining the ordinances of religion. They worshipped in a public school-house, and continued to occupy that building for a number of years; part of the time in connection with a small body of Episcopalians who worshipped every other Sabbath in the same humble edifice. During this period it was my privilege, a number of times, to preach to this congregation."

I quote this passage as it refers to the town itself, to the place in which the people worshipped, and to the mode of supply. Of these I wish to speak.

As to the town at the time, Dr. Miller calls it "a small village," or rather, "an inconsiderable hamlet." He refers, of course, to old Paulus Hoeck. This was a sand heap, made at high tide an island, with a salt marsh and a stream running through what is now Warren Street, toward Greene Street, from Communipaw Cove below to Harsimus Cove. It became the property of "The Jersey City Associates," incorporated about the same time that Presbyterian preaching was begun, or five years earlier than Dr. Miller's reference. It was bounded off from the adjacent land (or Mr. Cornelius Van Vorst's farm), by this stream of water, which, extending from cove to cove, though shallow at low tide and even dry in parts, was, at high tide, filled to the depth of six feet, and was easily traversed throughout by rowing-boats. Mr. Stephen Seaman tells me that his father, in the very earliest years of the century, moved from New York and kept house on Ellis Island, and that often the passengers from Philadelphia to New York were detained late at night, and were poled, in a covered boat, to the island, and the inmates were roused to get them supper. He also states that this same island was often resorted to from Paulus Hoeck by pleasure parties who went thither to enjoy the cool shade and the oyster suppers. Quite a bed of these shell-fish was kept supplied

at the end of the island. Paulus Hoeck itself, looked, as I said, like a sand bank. The beach, or landing, was just as it had always been. Roadways had been cut through, which are now our streets. Three years before (1802) there were resident on the island only thirteen persons.\* And when the Seaman family came in 1805, Mr. Seaman judges that, on the whole island, there were not more than a dozen houses, with the remains of two forts.

Among these houses, however, was one structure, in which we are particularly interested. It is the one in which, for more than twenty years, our Presbyterian predecessors, led by different ministers, worshipped God, on alternate Sabbaths, with the Episcopalians under the charge, first, of the Rev. Timothy Clowes, and next under that of the late Rev. Edward D. Barry, D.D. This house still stands—a relic of the past—a few yards from us, on Sussex Street, between Washington and Warren Streets.† After many inquiries, I have not been able to ascertain certainly who erected this building or the date of its erection. The statements are conflicting. Mr. Winfield states that it was finished in February, 1807.‡ Mr. Seaman, on the contrary, states that it was already built, and was new when he arrived in 1805, and that worship was then held in it. In the “New Jersey Register,” a small volume published in 1810 by Timothy Alden, and loaned to me by Hon. Robert Gilchrist,§ of this city, there is given (p. 100) an account of the incorporation of “The Jersey Academy.” This took place May 12, 1808. The Trustees were Amasa Jackson, Joseph Lyon, Henry Caldwell, David Hunt, Samuel Beach, Philip Williams; and Reuben Winchell was Preceptor. It has always been known as “The Academy.” And it is certain that it was built for *school* purposes. Dr. Benjamin C. Taylor’s suggestion is therefore probably correct, that it was erected by the

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\* Winfield’s History. He gives the names.

† In 1876. Since removed.

‡ Winfield’s History, p. 392.

§ Deceased 1888.

township of Bergen as a public school-house and afterward was incorporated, and that the use of it for *church* purposes was an afterthought. I have already referred to Mr. Seaman's statement that it was just finished when his father's family came here to live in 1805, and that at that time it was already used both for school and church purposes. Indeed it is certain that both were provided for; for the lower story was fitted up as a school-room and the upper story arranged for religious services. After the incorporation of Jersey City in 1820, it was called "The Town Hall," and was used, I am told, when the city ceased to be governed by the "Select Men," in 1838, for the induction of the Hon. Dudley S. Gregory, the first Mayor, into office. There has been a question whether it has always stood on the same foundation. Dr. Theodore **R.** Varick\* has a clear remembrance of two cells having been built underneath it, during his boyhood, for the retention of prisoners, and of his looking through the bars, with boyish awe, at the places of criminal confinement. And he has a very strong impression that the building was, at that time, moved back a considerable distance from its former position on the street. That the cells were built, there is no doubt. The place of them is pointed out to-day. But the recollection of others of the old inhabitants is so clear (*e. g.*, Mr. David Smith and Mr. Seaman), that it has never been removed, that we judge it stands now where it always did, but that it was altered for the purpose already mentioned. As all agree, it faced on what is now Sussex Street. One authority (Mr. W. Stone, of Jersey City,) declares that it originally stood with the gable-end toward the street. It stood, however, alone. As our Presbyterian friends went up to it there was no other house near. A row of Lombardy poplars stood in front, and a pathway led from the Grand Street side across the lot. Those who attended worship from that side were accustomed to drive from Grand Street across the lot in the

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\* Since deceased, 1887.

rear of the building. What is now Washington Street was opened. From below the Academy a continuous hill rose as one looked along Sussex to Greene Street. This was one of the forts alluded to. In the same manner a rising ground stood on Essex Street, at the foot of Washington Street, about forty feet distant. Here was the second fort. There was a redoubt, or hollow, along which soldiers could pass from one to the other in safety. This passed down Washington Street. This I have from Mr. Seaman, who tells me that he has several times seen "little Stephen Decatur," as he calls him, bring out his men from the vessel below and exercise them in the place between the two forts, on the ground fronting the church where we now are. I mention this circumstance as it will account for the apparent discrepancy in the recollection of those who remember this old place of worship and school several years later, in their childhood. Some of these recall it as standing on a hill. To others it stands out in memory as being on a level, or even somewhat in a hollow. Approaching the place of worship from Grand Street, it did, of course, seem to be on a hill, because part of Grand Street was low. While standing in front of the building and looking up east and south along Sussex Street and toward Essex Street, it seemed, viewed from the higher rising ground, to be (in contrast with the bank of sand) in a depression.

In this unpretending building, through weakness and discouragements, those who preceded us worshipped God; Presbyterians and Episcopalians both endeavoring to lay the foundations for these separate branches of the Church of God, for those who should come after them. And a number of families who still continue to attend the services of the Presbyterian, Reformed, and Episcopal churches retain pleasant memories of their regular rides to this old house of worship, in their early childhood. It was an early time indeed for Jersey City; a time when the houses were so few in this now compactly-built city that a family carriage starting from what is now Henderson and Second



Streets, and travelling to the church along the Newark road, could be easily seen for the whole distance by a person standing on Grand Street, beside the church.\*

Who were the preachers who ministered to this congregation it is difficult now to tell. All agree that there was quite a number of them. Among these we are sure that Dr. Samuel Miller, then of New York, appeared occasionally. For he distinctly says: "During this period it was my privilege a number of times to preach to this congregation, who continued worshipping in the school-house." Besides him, I find, in an old almanac loaned me by our At-

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\* To give some further idea of the place in those early days, I quote some personal recollections from the *Jersey City Evening Journal* of Jan. 19, 1883, in a communication by the late Samuel Bridgart, who came to Jersey City in 1819, and lived here until his death. He says of the year 1819: "At that time there were only 400 inhabitants in the tract, of whom Mr. David Smith is the sole survivor now living within its bounds." . . . "In the central portion were very high sand hills, on one of which a British fort was located. The residence of Mr. David Taylor now occupies the site of that fort. An intrenchment ran from the fort to the bay. The old revolutionary burying-ground was on the spot now bounded by Washington, Sussex, Morris, and Warren Streets, and when the sand hills were graded for building purposes, the remains of soldiers and others were unearthed. By order of the late Chas. Dummer, these remains were placed in sugar hogsheads and buried near the corner of Washington and Morris Streets. I saw the remains of a British officer dug up. His skull was in a good state of preservation. His epaulets and sword had been buried with him." . . . Of the primitive ferry, which then plied between Jersey City and New York, he says: "There were two boats—the *Jersey* and the *York*. They were catamarans, with the paddle in the middle and the whole decked over. It took twenty minutes to cross the river in summer, but in the winter the boats were frequently caught in the ice and carried down as far as Staten Island. A Maj. Hunt was the proprietor at one time, but was bought out by Cadwallader & Colden. The ferriage was a shilling, or twelve and a half cents. On the site now occupied by Colgate & Co.'s soap factory stood Lyon's Hotel, whence the mail coaches plying between New York and Philadelphia started. The building still stands in Grand Street." . . . "There were no churches in Paulus Hook at that time, but the Presbyterians occupied the old school-house, which now adjoins St.

torney-General, Robert Gilchrist, Esq., the name of the Rev. Eliphalet Price, of the Presbytery of Jersey, mentioned as a supply for Jersey (*i. e.*, the towns of Jersey) and Hackensack; and also the name of the Rev. Alexander Frazer, of Elizabeth.

The Presbyterians were the first to gather strength enough to build and occupy their own edifice. During almost all these years they had no regular pastor, nor indeed were they legally incorporated, as I shall show, and for the all-sufficient reason, I suppose, that they had no property to be held. But they were now to take a new

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Matthew's Church. They divided possession with the Episcopalians. On the west side of the school-house, a beautiful spot, covered with greensward and shaded by lofty poplars and spreading button-balls, and on the edge of the bank, under one of the latter, was the then famous 'Indian Spring,' to which the people flocked for potable water. There was another fine spring in Essex Street, west of Warren, which poured forth a cold stream of pure water out of a hollow log. There was no house near the school-house, the nearest being on what is now York Street, east of Greene Street, on Sussex Street, east of Greene Street, on Morris, east of Washington, and on Essex Street. All the land west of Warren Street was salt meadow, until the upland was reached. The only avenue of approach to Paulus Hook was a road which has since become Newark Avenue. It may not be generally known, that at the foot of what is now Morgan Street—then called North Point—Robert Fulton built his first steamboat. The old wind-mill stood north of Montgomery Street and east of Greene Street, where the Pennsylvania Railroad yard now is. It was considered the best mill in America, and was owned by Isaac Edge. The old 'Jersey Bank' was at the corner of Grand and Greene Streets, where the Morris Canal and Banking Company's office now is. Mr. Durand was president and T. B. Kissam cashier. The bonds were not stolen by the officers. There were few curbs and gutters to the streets in those days. There was, of course, no railroad, and New York depended for its food supplies upon wagons. Teams of from four to six horses used to come into the market ground, where Washington Square now is, all the way from Pennsylvania, bringing produce and returning with 'store goods.' On that little plot the produce of Sussex, Warren, Morris, Passaic, Bergen, and other counties changed hands."

step. And this forms the second epoch in the history of Presbyterianism in Jersey City—the building of their *first house of worship*.

I say *their* first house of worship; but I may add it was, by a number of years, the first house of worship built here by any denomination. And if any doubt should exist whether the Presbyterians were the first to hold religious services in this city, certainly none exists, that in God's good providence they were the first to build a house for His worship. And indeed it was so truly the *only* regular church building in the place for several years, that, on the Sabbath, persons of all denominations—Episcopalians, Reformed Dutch, and others as well as Presbyterians—were in the habit of attending service there, although the church was distinctively Presbyterian.

In Dr. Miller's paper, already referred to, we read as follows: "A short time before the year 1824 they called the Rev. James S. Olcott to be their minister. He was their first stated pastor, and, under his ministrations, they became so far strengthened and encouraged as to undertake the erection of a house of worship."

At this time, therefore, I find the first notice of the *incorporation* of the congregation. I hold in my hands the original paper, endorsed "Incorporation of the First Presbyterian Church and Congregation of Jersey City," and marked as recorded in the Clerk's office in the County of Bergen, on the 24th day of December, 1825.\* This paper sets forth that the subscribers have been duly elected trustees of a church and congregation in Jersey City, have taken the prescribed oaths, and that the church is to be known and distinguished by the name and title of "The First Presbyterian Church and Congregation of Jersey City." And then follow the signatures and seals of the first trustees, six in number: Samuel Cassidy, Robert Gilchrist, E. R. Dayton, John Condit, John Seaman, A. J. Yates. I wish you to note this

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\* Book W. 2 of Deeds.



fact, for it has been doubted whether this was ever a Presbyterian organization. And even within a few days I have heard it intimated that there was some doubt whether it was a Presbyterian or a Reformed Dutch. This point, you see, is clearly settled.

As has already been mentioned, the Rev. James S. Olcott had now been for several years their pastor, and they went on to build a suitable church. The money for the building was raised in good part by him from various quarters. Dr. Miller's words are: "In this enterprise Mr. Olcott was active and successful. He solicited contributions not only from the members of his own congregation, but from the friends of Presbyterianism in the neighboring parts of New Jersey and in the city of New York." For the lot on which the building was placed the congregation was indebted (as were also so many other Churches—the Episcopal, the Methodist, the Catholic, and finally this church where we now are) to the liberal foresight of the company called "The Jersey Associates," who, as already stated, became the proprietors of what was called "Paulus Hoeck," and who immediately laid out certain portions of land for church purposes. Mr. David Smith, of this city, states that this was in 1804. On application to these, at different times as they were needed by the several churches now occupying the ground, deeds for four full lots each were granted to four different denominations—Episcopalian, Presbyterian, Catholic, and Methodist—in a straight line running through from Sussex Street to York Street. The first *occupied* was that of the Presbyterians. The appropriation of this was peculiar. At first it is said to have been offered\* by the Associates to an organization that might possibly be formed by the Dutch Classis on the south side of Grand Street as far back as 1807, provided they would erect a suitable building within two years; and also that an application was made by the Rev. John Cornelison, of Bergen, and the Rev. Peter Stry-

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\* Dr. Taylor's History, p. 343.

ker, of Belleville, to the Classis to have such an organization effected, at "the desire of the inhabitants of Jersey City." A committee was appointed by the Classis and ministerial supplies provided; but in 1808 the committee reported that there were too few communicants and that the organization was impracticable. The gift, therefore, was not made, and the ground lay unappropriated until 1825, when the same land was deeded to "The First Presbyterian Church of Jersey City," then worshipping in the "Town Hall," for the purpose of erecting a church. We shall see presently that this title was some time after relinquished and the land was transferred to the Reformed Dutch Church, who now hold it.

I hold in my possession an extract from the records of the Jersey Associates. It appears that the order of application for the Presbyterians was as follows: The first application was made by the Rev. Alexander G. Frazer, of the Presbytery of Elizabethtown, for land in order to build a church and for a cemetery, in behalf of "The Presbyterian Church of Jersey City and Harsimus." This was as far back as September 5, 1818. On the second day of November, 1818, leave was granted, and four lots on the *north* side of Grand Street were donated and accepted. The grant was made to them under the title of "The Presbyterian Congregation of Jersey City and Harsimus," and the proviso was added that the building be erected in three years from date. This land was the same as that afterward occupied by the Catholic church in Jersey City. From the same document I find that soon after, or on the 9th day of November, 1818, Mr. John P. Durand was appointed a committee to select other lots than those chosen. He reported at the next meeting, and the lots assigned were those on the *south* side of Grand Street—the same as those in 1807 offered to the Reformed Dutch and not appropriated from failure to comply with the conditions. At the same meeting Mr. Kissam, as secretary, applied for ground on which to build a Protestant Episcopal church.\* The condition above-

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\* Statement in MS. given me by the late Hon. D. S. Gregory.

named, of building in three years, was not fulfilled by the Presbyterians, and the land now twice offered by the Associates was still unappropriated.

But in 1825 the Rev. James S. Olcott, having now become the pastor of the church, again renewed the application, and a committee was appointed "with power to agree to such a grant for the purpose aforesaid as they may deem advisable." This application was made just one month and eight days after the incorporation of the church. The result was that upon the appointment of the committee, or soon after, the grant was renewed by the Associates and the lots on the *south* side of Grand Street were deeded to "The First Presbyterian Church of Jersey City." \* The building was begun in 1826. The corner-stone was laid May 18th of that year by Col. Richard Varick, President of the Jersey City Associates.† This was exactly 50 years ago last May.‡ The builder was Mr. Jacob D. Van Winkle, of Bergen, with Mr. Stephen Seaman, now living in Jersey Avenue,§ one of his carpenters. It is stated by two persons still living in Jersey City that worship was held in the building before the pews were put in, the congregation being accommodated for the service with boards to sit upon. Mr. David W. Stone, born here in 1816 (now of North Plainfield, N. J.), and whose father had a pew in the building, informs me that he remembers well that general subscriptions were made for the building and taken out, in part at least, for pews, and that the pews were drawn for; that each pew was valued at twenty-five dollars, and also that each one paid one dollar for painting his pew. As the building had eighty pews on the ground floor, this, if all were sold, must have amounted to two thousand dollars. It is not probable that all were sold.

The building, at first, had no end gallery. Indeed this was not put in, I believe, for eight or ten years afterward.

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\* Dr. Taylor, in his *Annals*, p. 344, says that this was in 1828. This is evidently an error, as the building was begun in 1826.

† Winfield's *History*, p. 387.

‡ A.D. 1876.

§ 1876.

One corner of the building was upon the marsh; and in heavy rains and high tides there was danger to the building. Dr. Benjamin Taylor, of Bergen, has a recollection of one occasion when Mr. J. Morrison, the elder, came up in haste to the Reformed Dutch farmers, and procured teams and wagons to hasten down and fill in, so as to prevent the sinking of one end of the house.

To show the enterprise of the Presbyterian body, and also to suggest the difficulties with which they had to contend in erecting and maintaining this only house of worship in the place, I beg you to note that at this period the City of Jersey, so called, had been incorporated only about six years. It was, and continued to be for twelve years longer, under the rule of a Board of Selectmen and their President. And the inhabitants numbered less than one thousand.\* Two years later (1829) there were only ten hundred and twenty-five. In this frame building our Presbyterian predecessors met to worship God, under the pastoral care of the Rev. James S. Olcott, for about four years.†

They and their pastor were in connection with what, at first, had been called the Presbytery of New York; afterward (in 1810, that Presbytery having been divided) the Presbytery of Jersey, and within the bounds of the Synod of New York and New Jersey. But in 1825 it became the Presbytery of Newark, and was, in connection with the Synod of New Jersey; the old Synod of New York and New Jersey having that year been divided into two—the Synod of New York and the Synod of New Jersey. The elders were John Morrison, John Seaman, and Benjamin Decker. The trustees I have before mentioned.

The very circumstances of the case as thus exhibited, and indeed their own statement to the Presbytery made afterward on the event of their passing over to the Reformed

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\* For these and following statements as to incorporation--induction of first Mayor, etc.—see Winfield's History, pp. 287, 288.

† Dr. Miller says "five or six years," which is plainly an error.

Dutch body,\* shows that they were comparatively few, and that they got on only by painstaking and self-sacrifice.

In the month of July the Rev. James S. Olcott sought from the Presbytery the dissolution of the pastoral relation. The cause for this, as stated by the Rev. Dr. Miller, was Mr. Olcott's failing health.† The request was granted, the pastoral relation was dissolved, and Mr. Olcott for the rest of his life preached elsewhere. This step produced another change in Presbyterian affairs in Jersey City. This was the transfer of the congregation and the property to the Reformed Dutch Church. It forms the third salient point in the history of the Presbyterian Church here.

A good deal of controversy arose on this subject at the time of the dedication of this building in which we are now assembled. Let me endeavor to give a true statement of the case, after a careful search. I think, that on the review, you will not judge anybody to have been much to blame. The following I find well confirmed by the statements from both sides, and by written documents in my possession. Let me state it, and close my remarks for to-day.

It appears that after Mr. Olcott left them, the congregation became even more feeble than before, and the Session had difficulty in getting forward. I find, however, from their memorial that they nevertheless tried faithfully to procure a pastor. Just before this time (in 1828) the pastor of the Reformed Dutch Church in Bergen, the Rev. John Cornelison, had died, and his successor, the Rev. Benjamin C. Taylor, had been installed. A prominent candidate in the minds of some, for that pulpit, had been the Rev. Stephen H. Meeker, settled at Bushwick, on Long Island. A number of the Reformed Dutch people, who lived in Ahasimus and Jersey City, were warm friends of his. These

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\* See extract from the minutes of the Presbytery, in a statement of the elders, on a following page.

† Dr. Miller's MS., before referred to.



persons, now seeing the pulpit of the Presbyterian Church in Jersey City vacant, proposed that Mr. Meeker should be called; and they offered in that event to fall in with the enterprise. There was no proposal, however, on their part that its ecclesiastical relations should be changed. Moved by this impulse, the elders invited Mr. Meeker to preach in the Presbyterian Church. This fully accords with Dr. Miller's statement, who says that "Mr. Meeker preached for them several times with great acceptance." The congregation thereupon called him to the pastorate. Mr. Meeker delayed for some time to reply; and finally, being pressed for an answer, he informed them that he could not accept, as he did not wish to leave the Reformed Dutch Church. According to the elders' own statement, the question was then distinctly put to him: "Whether he would accept a call to Jersey City if a Reformed Dutch Church was organized?" To this he responded in the affirmative. The Rev. B. C. Taylor was now approached, by Elder Morrison and others, to ascertain if the church at Bergen would yield some of its own members to the enterprise, provided the Presbyterian congregation went over to the Reformed Dutch body. Dr. Taylor tells me that he replied he would do nothing unless a regular application should be made to the Classis for organization, giving the number and names of the families who should apply. This brought the matter to a crisis. A public meeting of the Presbyterian congregation was called for the 3d day of January, 1830, to consider the question of a change of their ecclesiastical relations. The meeting was held on Sabbath, after divine service. I think Dr. Taylor preached. It is in a manuscript of the church that Elder John Seaman presided, and Mr. Andrew Anderson acted as secretary. A statement of the efforts to obtain Mr. Meeker as pastor was then made, with the result that the trustees had solicited from him a distinct answer to the question, "If we become a Reformed Dutch Church, will you accept the pastorate?" and that he had replied in the affirmative. And the Session and trus-

tees then and there asked the congregation to decide whether they would make the change. A statement was then made (I think by Dr. Taylor, for he tells me that he did make such a statement at some time) of the difference between the Presbyterian and the Reformed Dutch churches. These having been found to relate to minor matters affecting the time for which ruling elders are elected, the congregation then passed two resolutions, as follows: "1. *Resolved*, That it is expedient to effect a change of our church relations from the Presbytery of Newark to the Classis of Bergen of the Reformed Dutch Church." This was passed; ayes 68, noes 2. Dr. Taylor tells me he heard *one* No, very decided, and he named the man. There might, he says, have been others; but he did not hear them. The official report gives two in the negative. "2. *Resolved*, That the Session and trustees of this church be and they hereby are empowered to carry this resolution into effect." One of the elders was about removing from Jersey City. The Session dismissed all the members, without exception, to the new Reformed Dutch Church to be organized, and then dismissed each other. The trustees of the church soon after executed a sort of quit-claim for the property to the trustees of the new Dutch Church; and a subsequent act of the Jersey Associates, at the suggestion of the late Mr. Peter Bentley, transferred not long afterward the property to them. The Classis of Bergen met, and the application for organization was made. "A petition signed by forty-eight heads of families, and thirty-eight communicants, was presented to the Classis on the 16th day of February in that year (1830), and was acted upon favorably. A Consistory was duly elected and ordained, and thus the church was duly constituted."\* The organization was thus effected, the property passed into their hands, and they became and still continue to be the First Reformed Dutch Church of Jersey City.† From the records of the Presbytery of Newark, un-

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\* Dr. Taylor's Annals, p. 344.

† In 1876. Disbanded April, 1886.

der date of October, 1830, we learn that "a communication from the elders of the church of Jersey City was received and read, and it was ordered that it be put on the files of the Presbytery." This communication was dated February 16, 1830, the same day on which the petition (as above stated) was presented to the Classis. A copy of that communication, attested by the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery, I hold in my hands. It sets forth what I have stated, viz.: the change and the reasons for it from the beginning. It declares that the congregation was convinced that the step was the best to be taken under the circumstances. It then proceeds to say that it was from no intended disrespect whatever to the Presbytery that the case had not been first presented to the Presbytery for its consideration and that the Session had acted in accordance with the resolutions adopted by the congregation, but simply because it had been evident to them that to have waited until the Presbytery had been consulted would have materially impeded their efforts to procure the minister whom they hoped to receive. The Presbytery heard this communication, but I think took no action. The church, I find, is regularly recorded on their roll, sent to the General Assembly, for seven years afterward as the Presbyterian Church of Jersey City. But in April, 1838, a committee of inquiry having been appointed by the Presbytery to ascertain the existing condition of the congregation, a report was made and the church was dropped from the roll of the Presbytery. This tells the whole story. And now, looking at all the facts of the case in evidence, I think the just line is drawn as follows: In the first place, the Presbyterians had no one to blame for the change but themselves. It was a clearly understood and almost unanimous determination of the people to pass over their organization and their property for what they considered to be a suitable equivalent (due support) to the Reformed Dutch body. And in the next place, if any one or more of them objected—as they had a right to do and did—it was still only the objection of a very small minority,



and could not affect the validity of the transfer. It was, whether advantageous or not, the act of the Presbyterian congregation themselves, and they could justly find no fault with any one. On the other hand, it seems not unreasonable to suppose that our Dutch friends did not shed many tears upon the transfer being made. This, I say, tells the whole story. And all thoughts of debate or dissatisfaction may hereafter be buried out of sight.

Thus, after continuing about twenty-six years in existence from the first regular preaching of the Gospel to them, and exactly twenty-one years since its organization (from January 10, 1809, to January, 1830, when the meeting to make the change was held), the First Presbyterian Church of Jersey City passed out of existence by the act of the congregation itself, and for fourteen years afterward there existed no Presbyterian church in Jersey City whatever.

Mr. Meeker continued pastor of the new Reformed Dutch church for only a few months, and then returned to his former charge in Bushwick, L. I., where he remained until his death, which took place only a short time ago. The congregation went forward harmoniously in its new church relations. Presbyterians coming to the city, of which there soon began to be many, cast in their lot with the First Reformed Dutch church, and thus for fourteen years they continued to worship together. As an interesting reminiscence, I hold in my hand a diagram of the pews in the old church edifice before the gallery was put in, with the name of each occupant as they were seated on the Sabbath—Presbyterians and Reformed Dutch seated side by side. This was about the year 1836. This list of names and their position in the church would doubtless call up many pleasant and some sad memories to those who can recollect them—names, they are, honored in Jersey City; a few of them still remaining with their descendants, but others gone before to the assembly above.

This Reformed Dutch church had in succession as pas-

tors \* after Mr. Meeker, the Rev. James R. Talmage, February 8, 1831. It was then still a feeble church. The connection lasted until January 30, 1833, during which time twenty-three were added to the church-roll. Mr. Talmage was followed November 19, 1833, by the Rev. Matthias Lusk, who continued pastor for fifteen years, until October 26, 1848. During his ministry the communion-roll reached about one hundred, and the families attending about the same number. The church was refitted and a lecture-room attached, and the congregation was freed from debt.

We pause here, as it was during his ministry that the later effort was made to introduce Presbyterianism again into Jersey City.

In the summer of 1853 the old building was removed nearly opposite its former site to the north side of Grand Street, in order to make room for the present fine stone structure of the First Reformed Church, and was afterward known by the name of "Park Hall." It was destroyed by fire on the night of December 12, 1864. The origin of the fire is, I believe, unknown.

This brings us to the fourth important period in this history; the time when a successful effort was made to revive and perpetuate the First Presbyterian Church of Jersey City, and which issued in the organization of our present congregation and the building of the edifice where we are now seated. The details of this movement are too many and too interesting to be taken up now. I shall, therefore, reserve this account until next Sabbath morning.

And now, as we pass from this review of our early history, so feeble and so changeful, let me remind you—

I. That as beginnings are very important in all valuable earthly enterprises, so are they also in God's worship; and hence the Scripture admonishes us not to despise the day of small things. How small was Abraham's family in the be-

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\* For account of successive pastors during the following fourteen years, see Dr. Taylor's Annals, pp. 344, 345.

ginning, and now they are as the sand upon the sea-shore, and the consequences connected with them as a race, as immensely great as they are enduring. Compared with the gorgeous temple of Solomon, how small was the tabernacle in the wilderness built by a travelling people, and taken down and set up at every step and carried from place to place. And yet God was there in the beginning, just as truly as He was amidst the grand chorus of trumpets when they praised the Lord on high. How feeble were many of the early apostolic churches, and with what feeble steps did the church progress from land to land through continental Europe and in Great Britain. You see the same in America—the log-church, the small rude cabin, the feeble and struggling congregation, and then the prosperous people and the commodious and even stately building.

2. Let us remember this, and let us remember further that the zeal and self-sacrifice expended for these early efforts and for this progress are gifts and graces to be emulated. God approves them; God blesses them. These men work and give and pray for the generations to come after them. Let us never then despise the day of feebleness in Christ's churches here, or in our Western wilds, or in foreign lands. God blesses the spirit which can give and labor and pray in faith and hope for such enterprises. Whereas, shame be to him who can unite and sail gayly on only when the tide is strong and the wind is favorable and the company large and enthusiastic. Such religious zeal partakes largely of the flesh. It is the spirit, which in true love for God's worship will have that worship and will provide for it at great odds and with great labor and under great difficulties, that shows itself to be of Heaven.

3. And let us remember, too, that while such enterprises change, and churches change, and congregations pass away, yea, even God's own temple on Moriah crumbles to dust, the true church, the true temple is the spiritual one, the "living stones built by God for a habitation of God through the Spirit." And this lives and must live forever. And

when all the present and all past organizations, civil or ecclesiastical, have spent their day and done their work and passed away, then shall be the gathering of all into the one assembly of the Lord—into the heavenly city where the apostle saw no temple therein, “for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple thereof; and they shall see His face, and His name shall be in their foreheads, and they shall reign forever and forever.”

## SERMON II.

"Unto the place which the Lord your God shall choose out of all your tribes to put His name there, even unto His habitation shall ye seek, and thither thou shalt come."  
—DEUT. xii. 5.

"And the Lord said unto him, I have heard thy prayer and thy supplication that thou hast made before me : I have hallowed this house which thou hast built, to put my name there forever ; and mine eyes and mine heart shall be there perpetually."  
—1 KINGS ix. 3.

"In all places where I record my name I will come unto thee, and I will bless thee."—EXODUS xx. 24.

"Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands. Serve the Lord with gladness : come before His presence with singing. Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise : be thankful unto Him, and bless His name."—PS. c. 1, 2, 4.

"I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them."  
—MATT. xviii. 19, 20.

"Greet Priscilla and Aquila my helpers in Christ Jesus ; likewise greet the church that is in their house."—ROM. xvi. 3, 5.

"Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering ; (for he is faithful that promised) ; And let us consider one another, to provoke unto love, and to good works : Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is ; but exhorting one another : and so much the more as ye see the day approaching."—HEB. x. 23-25.

GOD is unseen. But He is nevertheless to be worshipped by outward acts. He is indeed to be worshipped in spirit and in truth. And this is essential to all true worship of God. Without this, the costliest buildings, or the most elaborate and impressive ritual, or the most fervid service, or the most profound prostrations, are as nothing. This is all true. And yet, formed as man is with a body as well as a soul, his very spiritual exercises necessarily having their outlet (and especially during social worship) in external forms and ceremonies, there must be some such outward expression of his inward, spiritual devotions, or there can be very little social worship whatever. Now this fact makes

it a necessity that there should be some locality for the gathering together of God's people, "that with one heart and with one mouth they may glorify God." Hence the appointed yearly feasts of the Lord's house and the special place for their observance under the Old Testament. Hence God's promise respecting it: "In all places where I record my name I will come unto you and bless you." Hence the synagogues of Israel in Christ's time, which, "as His manner was, He regularly attended" (Luke iv. 16). Hence the place by the "river-side where prayer was wont to be made." Hence the divine injunction under the new dispensation, "Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together, but exhort one another, and so much the more as ye see the day approaching." And again, "If the whole church be assembled together in one place, and all prophecy and there come in one unbelieving or unlearned, he is reproved by all, he is judged by all, the secrets of his heart are made manifest, and so he will fall down on his face and worship God, declaring that God is among you indeed." Sanctified human nature cries aloud everywhere for acts of social worship and a place in which together to meet God. It is true that distinct and definite places set apart distinctively for the service of God are not essential to the fervor or spirituality or acceptableness of either private or social worship. Our fathers, like the early Christian Church, often enjoyed the purifying communications of the Holy Spirit, and felt the sweetness of Gospel truth when gathered together on the lonely shore or in the private dwelling. In times of persecution they met together and found God amidst rocks hardly accessible to their pursuers, and experienced the joys of God's worship, with no canopy over them but the heavens, as truly as they could have done in the fairest of tabernacles. And yet the Church has ever found, wherever opportunity offered, the great advantage of distinct places appropriated to the worship of God, and associated in every pious mind with the holy exercises of Christian worship, both for the due cultivation of the Church's



own graces, and also for the most advantageous training of her young children in the ways of God's truth. Social worship, in a word, is, in its way, as truly a necessity for men's best spiritual welfare as is private worship. And it is no unmeaning phrase which the Psalmist utters when he cries: "In the midst of the congregation I will give thanks to Thy name"; or again, "I will pay my vows unto the Lord now in the courts of the Lord's house, in the presence of all His people." Nor was it all a superstitious feeling which in the new-born church in the earliest days prompted "all that believed to be together," "continuing steadfastly, day by day, with one accord in the temple"; "all gathering together in Solomon's porch." For in these appointed places the Lord meets with His people, and in the joy and grace of true social worship, the earthly houses of His service become, as Bethel to Jacob, the places where heaven is opened and where we see, with spiritually anointed eyes, the ladder which reaches from earth to heaven, whereon the angels of God ascend and descend to bring blessings to the heirs of salvation.

Oh, it is joy for those to meet,  
Whom one communion blends,  
Council to hold in converse sweet,  
And talk as Christian friends.

'Tis joy to think the angel train,  
Who 'mid heaven's temple shine,  
To seek our earthly temples deign,  
And in our anthems join.

But chief 'tis joy to think that He  
To whom His church is dear,  
Delights her gathered flock to see,  
Her joint devotions hear.

Then who would choose to walk abroad  
While here such joys are given;  
"This is indeed the house of God,  
And this the gate of heaven!"

I have already traced the origin and progress of the First Presbyterian Church of Jersey City from its feeble begin-

nings (soon after the incorporation of the Jersey City Associates, in 1804, and their purchase of the island known as Paulus Hoeck), in their early assemblages for divine worship in the old Academy about the year 1805, up to the time of the church's organization by the Presbytery of New York and the ordination of the first two elders by the hands of the Rev. Samuel Miller, D.D. (then pastor of the Wall St. Pres. Church in New York), Jan. 10, 1809; from this point onward in their continued worship in the Jersey Academy, on alternate Sabbaths with the Episcopalians, through ministerial supplies from the Presbyteries of New York and of Jersey, up to the year 1824, when they received their first settled pastor, the Rev. Mr. Olcott, from the Presbytery of Newark. Then followed their legal incorporation, in 1825; their erection of their first house of worship on Grand Street, in 1826; the dissolution of Mr. Olcott's pastoral relation, in 1829; and the final transfer of the congregation and the property, by general consent, to the Classis of Bergen, in 1830. We have also seen that for fourteen years subsequently the Presbyterian Church in Jersey City was extinct, Presbyterians, with the Reformed Dutch, worshipping harmoniously together in their old home on the south side of Grand Street.

We have come now to the fourth important period in our history; the time when a successful effort was made to revive and perpetuate the Presbyterian Church in Jersey City. The prominent movers in this scheme were generally attendants at the Reformed Dutch church. The Rev. Dr. Miller\* states that the movement was prompted by a number of individuals who had opposed the transfer of the congregation to our Reformed Dutch brethren (adding, "for on the vote of transfer there was a respectable minority"), together with other Presbyterians who had joined them. The first part of this statement I regard as an error. Their own official statement, already referred to, gives only two in the

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\* In his address at the dedication of the new building in 1845.



minority. Dr. Taylor heard only one loud No. Besides, it was nearly sixteen years afterward when Dr. Miller's address was delivered. As to the second part of the statement there is no doubt. Many other Presbyterians had come into the city. The population was growing rapidly and there was every prospect of success for the new movement. From 1830, when the church had passed to the Dutch Reformed, the population had grown in 1845 from 1,100 to 4,258,\* or nearly fourfold. One authority gives the population as 5,700.†

Prominent among the promoters of this movement were the late David Henderson and Dudley S. Gregory. Indeed we may say that it was mainly owing to the energy and liberality of these gentlemen—both now gone—that the enterprise was indebted for its successful and speedy accomplishment. Let us now trace the steps taken to realize their plan.

• As early as the year 1843, I find, by a careful comparison of dates, that there had been regular Presbyterian worship in Jersey City, continued for, at least, five or six months. This had been instituted by a number of Presbyterians who had come to the place from the north of Ireland and from Scotland. The meetings were held in the Lyceum on Grand Street. I believe that the chief leaders in that movement did not usually attend at the Reformed Dutch church in Grand Street. At the same time, it is known that some of those who were afterward prominent in the undertaking to establish our church were among those worshippers in the Lyceum. Mr. Henderson was. So was Mr. Gregory. So was Mr. Isaac Paterson, who presided at the first meeting to prepare the way for this church of ours. So were a number of others who identified themselves afterward with our church as soon as it was organized. Some of these yet live among us. One lady tells me that she attended these

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\* Winfield's History.

† Article by Hon. D. S. Gregory published at the time.

meetings, to which I have referred, through a whole summer. And this has been clearly ascertained to be in 1843. I was at first inclined to believe, from report, that these meetings took place in the "Temperance Hall" or "Washington Hall," as it was then called, a building yet standing\* near the Police Station; and, as almost the only public building existing at that time, was used for public purposes generally. But I have been convinced that the meetings in the "Temperance Hall" were those held by the Baptists, although they were sometimes attended by Presbyterians, and among others by some of those who were early identified with our own church. The place of the Presbyterian meetings, therefore, was, as I have already stated, in the Lyceum on Grand Street, and the services were held on both Sabbath mornings and afternoons.

The pulpit was supplied by several persons. But the regular stated supply was the Rev. David Sims. Mr. Sims was a native of Scotland,† an ordained minister, and taught school at Douglass farm on Long Island. He came regularly over from New York, and was, for the most part, entertained by Mr. Isaac Paterson, who then lived in Morris Street, below Washington Street, in a house which has long since been removed to give place to the brick dwelling numbered until recently No. 49. I have diligently searched the records of the General Assembly in New York to find out Mr. Sims' ecclesiastical connection, but without success. He probably belonged to the United Secession body. Nor do I know why he withdrew from this enterprise or why the meetings came to an end. End, they did, however. But they were not without their result. For they afforded an additional proof of the growth of the Presbyterian element in Jersey City and helped to prepare the way for the movement which followed early in the next year. It began to be

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\* In 1876. Since removed, about 1886.

† The account of Mr. Sims is from a lady still living in Jersey City who attended the services.

evident to those interested that the time had arrived for a more decided effort and for concerted action. And this led to the first meeting to bring about a regular Presbyterian organization.

The first meeting for this purpose was held in the month of February, 1844, at the house of Dr. William F. Clerk, and his brother, Mr. Andrew Clerk, in Morris Street, the fourth door from Hudson Street, on the north side. The object, as expressed in the invitation issued, was to take into consideration "the propriety of forming a Presbyterian Church, and erecting a house of worship in this city." Mr. Isaac Paterson, who still lives among us, though now very ill and failing,\* was called to the chair, and Dr. William F. Clerk was appointed secretary. A free interchange of views was held, and it was at length "*Resolved*, That it is expedient to form a Presbyterian Church and to erect a building." Immediate measures were then taken to obtain organization from the Presbytery of New York, and to secure the stated services of a minister. The Presbytery of New York was chosen, rather than that of Newark, because it was more convenient, and because a number of those who would join the enterprise were in churches connected with that Presbytery.† There was living at that time in New York the Rev. John Johnstone, then preaching, for a short time, to the United Presbyterian Church in Jane Street. Mr. Johnstone was a native of Scotland, and had been settled as pastor over the Eglinton Street Church, in Glasgow, in connection with the United Secession (now U. P.) Church.‡ He had been an early friend of Mr. David Henderson (I believe that Mr. Henderson's father had attended on his ministry), and had come to this country in 1844, and was at this time, and when called to this church, a member of the Second

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\* 1876. Since deceased.

† Notes in MS. prepared by Hon. B. F. Randolph.

‡ Note from Rev. James Harkness, of Jersey City, formerly of Scotland. Since deceased, 1878.

Presbytery of New York. The attention of those engaged in the new enterprise in Jersey City was at once turned to him. And at the same meeting of which I have spoken (in February, 1844), Messrs. David Henderson, L. D. Hardenburgh, and E. C. Bramhall were appointed a committee to secure Mr. Johnstone to preach on Sabbath evenings. The report of the committee was favorable, and at a meeting, also held in Mr. Clerk's house soon afterward, it was resolved to secure the Lyceum in Grand Street, and to fit it up for Sabbath-evening services. Mr. Johnstone preached for the new enterprise, and with so much acceptance, that at a meeting held in the same place, Feb. 28, 1844 (Mr. Lebeus Chapman presiding), a committee was appointed to obtain subscriptions for the regular support of a pastor, and also to address a letter to Mr. Johnstone, requesting him to supply the pulpit regularly, and offering him one thousand dollars per annum, and holding out expectations, in the event of their being organized, that he would undoubtedly be called to be their pastor. The committee was successful in their efforts to raise funds, and they wrote to Mr. Johnstone, who accepted the invitation to preach. A petition was then prepared, under date of February 13,\* 1844, requesting the Presbytery of New York to organize the young congregation. The petition is signed by forty-five names. They are: Thomas Stevenson, James Bunckle, James Morrison, Jr., William E. Smith, Andrew Clerk, Thomas W. James, Erastus Randall, Luther T. Stowell, Charles Scott, William F. Clerk, A. Gunn, Lewis D. Hardenburgh, David S. Huntington, Dudley S. Gregory, Henry J. Taylor, E. J. Stinson, Edward Stevenson, James Gopsill, Samuel Davidson, N. Sanderson, B. W. Ryder, Isaac Paterson, Samuel Craig, John Jelly, George Duncan, William Rhoads, John Nash, William Clerk, Daniel Baldwin, T. L. Smith, John Bell, Henry Southmayd, John Perrine, Henry Amsden, E. C. Bramhall, Henry M. Alexander, David Henderson, David Paterson, J. D. Miller, Alexander Wilson,

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\* This is, I think, a clerical error for March 13.

A. B. Marks, Oliver S. Strong, Lebbeus Chapman, Asa Vandergrift, and David Easton. Many of these names are still familiar to us. Only five of them, however, owing to the changes by death and removal, are now in this congregation.

The petition was favorably received by the Presbytery on April 16, 1844, and they appointed the Rev. Gardiner Spring, D.D., Rev. William W. Phillips, D.D., and Elders Sampson and Couch, to visit Jersey City and organize the church. The meeting of the congregation for organization was held in the Reformed Dutch Church on Grand Street (the old homestead), on Monday, April 22, 1844, and then and there the committee of Presbytery already named organized the church. The Rev. Dr. Phillips preached the sermon, and the Rev. Dr. Spring delivered an address, and ordained three elders—there chosen by the congregation—viz., Oliver S. Strong, Luther T. Stowell, and Lewis D. Hardenburgh. As the nucleus of the new church there were received by the committee of Presbytery the following eleven persons, on certificate from other churches, viz.: Oliver S. Strong, Mrs. Margaret Strong, Isabella Nicholson, Lewis D. Hardenburgh, Mrs. Ellen Hardenburgh, Lebbeus Chapman, Mrs. Eliza Chapman, Edward Charles Bramhall, Luther T. Stowell, Mrs. Mary Stowell, and B. W. Ryder. Six of these were from the Reformed Dutch Church in Jersey City, and five from Presbyterian churches in New York. On the 10th of May, 1844, the committee reported the organization to the Presbytery of New York. The name of the new church was entered on their roll, and Mr. O. S. Strong took his seat in Presbytery as the representative of the new church.

On the next day after the organization, a meeting of the Session was held and a summons of the congregation issued to call a pastor, if the way should be clear. The congregational meeting was held on Monday, 29th April, 1844, at the Lyceum.\* There was but one nomination. The Rev.

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\* April 29, 1844. The same day of the year upon which, forty-four years afterward, the closing exercises were held in the church building.



John Johnstone was unanimously elected as pastor, at an annual salary of one thousand dollars. The Rev. Dr. William W. Phillips presided, by invitation, at this meeting.

The call having been duly presented by the Presbytery and accepted by Mr. Johnstone, the meeting for the installation of the pastor was held in the Reformed Dutch Church in Grand Street on Monday, May 20, 1844. At this service the Rev. John Goldsmith, of Newtown, L. I., preached from Matthew xvi. 18—"Upon this rock," etc. The Rev. Jonathan Greenleaf, of Wallabout, Brooklyn, presided. The Rev. Edward D. Smith, of Chelsea Presbyterian Church, New York, gave the charge to the pastor, and the Rev. Jared Dewing, of Greenbush, N. Y., the charge to the people, and closed with prayer. The Sabbath-school was begun by a call on the people for teachers on Sabbath evening, May 4th, and the organization of the Sabbath-school took place soon afterward. Mr. Lebbeus Chapman was the first Superintendent. The meeting for formal organization as a corporate body had been held in the Lyceum, March 5, 1844, and at that meeting the following gentlemen were elected trustees, viz.: Dudley S. Gregory, David Henderson, Lewis D. Hardenburgh, Oliver S. Strong, Henry Southmayd, Erastus Randall, and Henry M. Alexander. Oliver S. Strong was elected President of the Board of Trustees and Henry M. Alexander was elected Secretary.\* The first communion service was held June 30, 1844, and it was ordered to be administered on the last Sabbath of each quarter. At this first communion eight members were received on certificate and two on profession of their faith. The names of these are as follows: Alice M. Johnstone, Margaret J. C. Johnstone, Nancy Scott, Emily Hubbard, Thomas H. Shafer, Isabella Stewart, Margaret Caldwell, and Harriet Randall (on certificate), and Isabella Lightbody and Erastus Randall (on profession). Thus, with a congregation numbering forty-five heads of families, and with a

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\* Notes in MS. prepared by Hon. B. F. Randolph.

communion-roll of twenty-one members, the Presbyterian Church of Jersey City was revived after a silence of fourteen years and sent forward on its mission.

The way was now open for some movement to erect a new house of worship and a home for the resuscitated church. Even before the installation of the pastor had taken place, plans were already well matured (in the spring of 1844) for this purpose, the result of which was the erection of the building in which we are now assembled. I do not know that originally it was the purpose of those in the lead of the new enterprise to complete their design by re-erecting the old Wall Street church if it could be purchased. Yet this idea must have occurred to them; for I find by a comparison of dates in our own trustees' records and those of the trustees of the First Presbyterian Church in New York, that before that congregation had determined to build entirely anew and to relinquish the use of the material of the building in Wall Street (which was after May, 1844), our trustees had on April 13th of that year not only conceived the idea of the purchase of the Wall Street building, but had appointed as a committee, Mr. O. S. Strong, President of the Board, and Mr. Henry Southmayd to confer with a committee of the trustees of the First Church in New York, with full power to make the purchase of the Wall Street church if it could be bought. And on the 18th of April the same committee were empowered to close the purchase on whatever terms were possible. Indeed, I think that the idea of selling their building at all was first suggested to the Wall Street people by our trustees; for the records in New York as late as May 13, 1844, state that the Wall Street congregation were still in doubt whether they would not build an improved edifice from the old material; and it was not until June 20, 1844 (or over two months after the appointment of our committee), that they mark the first application from our Board of Trustees for the purchase of the building, and refer the matter to their building committee.

With what particular person the idea originated of undertaking the novel enterprise of conveying a stone edifice so far and reproducing it in its original proportions, I do not know; although, as I said, it is quite certain that it came from this side of the river.\* The building originally stood on the north side of Wall Street, between Broadway and Nassau Street, and nearly opposite New Street.

And now, as the enterprise was a novel one, and especially as this beautiful building, which has so long been an ornament to our city, has a history, I may turn aside in closing this discourse to speak a few words of what was the First Presbyterian Church of the city of New York.

The history of the church building which we occupy goes back to the very rise of Presbyterian worship in the city of New York, and hence we must extend our view to that point. The rise of the Presbyterian Church in New York dates from the year 1707, almost one hundred years before the beginnings of Presbyterian preaching, as I have shown you, in Jersey City. The materials for forming such a church in New York at that time were a number of French Protestant Huguenots and of Presbyterians from Scotland and Ireland. The first motion toward organic life was in the preaching of two Presbyterian ministers—the Rev. Francis McKemie and the Rev. John Hampton from Virginia, in the house of Mr. William Jackson, in the lower part of Pearl Street. These gentlemen were arrested by the order of Lord Cornbury,† Governor of New York province, for preaching without a license in the province. Mr. McKemie was confined two months, and after trial, though set free, was sentenced to pay as costs £83 7s. 6d. This was in 1707. This persecution did not kill Presbyterianism, however. The congregation worshipped in private houses. Ten years later the first organization took place.

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\* Mr. Andrew Clerk's recollection was, I believe, that it was first proposed by Mr. David Henderson.

† Disosway's "Earliest Churches of New York," p. 131.



In 1717 John Nicholl, Patrick McKnight, Gilbert Simpson, and Thomas Smith, with a few others, were organized as a Presbyterian church and connected with the Presbytery of Philadelphia. They called the Rev. James Anderson, of that Presbytery, who was thus the first settled Presbyterian minister of New York City.

About this time a small diversion was made by some who preferred the usages of the New England churches. An inconsiderable number left the new organization and were served by Mr. Jonathan Edwards, then a young man of 19, and afterward the world-wide-known President Edwards of Northampton Church and of Princeton College. This division, however, soon subsided. Mr. Edwards declined to remain, and the party who had withdrawn returned. The Wall Street church was thus always Presbyterian, and never Congregational, as has been asserted.

The First Presbyterian Church of New York at first worshipped in the City Hall, which then stood where now the United States Treasury building stands, at the corner of Nassau and Wall Streets. And they continued there about three years.\* They were not, however, all this time without thinking of building. In 1718, or one year after their organization, they had purchased lots on Wall Street, near Broadway, the same site on which the building we now occupy formerly stood. And in 1719 the first Presbyterian house of worship in that city was built. Funds for the purpose were obtained not only in this country, but from abroad. A charter was obtained from "the Council." But the Vestry of Trinity Church interfered. They had great influence at court, and the authorities for more than half a century refused a charter of incorporation to the Presbyterian Church in New York, and what was more, they thus prevented the church from receiving as a corporate body any legacies. I ought to add now, that this act of intolerance on the part of Trinity was more than atoned for, however,

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\* Disosway's "Earliest Churches," p. 133, *et seq.*

when (after the war of the Revolution) the Vestry of that church generously opened their doors—St. George's and St. Paul's chapels—to the Presbyterians of Wall Street and of the Brick Church, whose edifices had been left by the British untenable, to hold regular services. And these were used by the Presbyterians until the year 1784. And especially was it atoned for when the same Vestry donated, for the support of the oldest Presbyterian minister in New York, a house in Beekman Street, the interest of which (about \$500, I believe,) was enjoyed for years by the Rev. Gardiner Spring, D.D., and since his death is to-day, I believe, received by the Rev. Dr. McElroy, the oldest living minister now in New York.\* As the authorities denied incorporation the Presbyterians were obliged to vest their title for building and ground in the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland. And so the title stood for sixty years, or until after the Revolution, and then the Trustees of the General Assembly reconveyed the property to the Trustees of the Wall Street church.† The building thus erected in Wall Street in 1719 remained until 1748.

And now we reach the interesting occasion for erecting the *second* Wall Street edifice. In 1740 the Rev. George Whitefield came to America. The Rev. Ebenezer Pemberton had been, from 1726, the pastor of the Wall Street church, in the place of Rev. Mr. Anderson, who had resigned. And Mr. Pemberton was the only minister in New York who would open his pulpit to Whitefield. To this congregation

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\* In 1876.

† "William Smith, in his 'History of the Province of New York,' published in London, 1757, states that the grant of a charter of incorporation was refused by Col. Schuyler, also by Gov. Barbour, and those who held the title to the church property in Wall Street conveyed it March 16, 1730, to the Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland; and the General Assembly, August 15, 1732, executed, under seal, an instrument declaring that the property was held for the use of the Presbyterians residing in or near New York." (Notes in MS. by Hon. B. F. Randolph.)

in Wall Street thus is due the honor, under God, of paving the way for Whitefield's influence in New York. The effect of Whitefield's preaching, in the additions to the Wall Street church, was so great that the house became too strait for the families of worshippers. And this led to the construction of the second Wall Street building, which was the same one of 1719 thoroughly renewed and enlarged in 1748. Mr. William Smith, in his "History of New York," published 1757, just referred to,\* describes this reconstructed building as "being of stone, railed off from the street, 80 feet long and 60 wide. The steeple was raised on the south-west end (*i. e.*, in front and toward Broadway), and was 145 feet high."

The congregation in 1757 consisted of from twelve to fourteen hundred souls, and was under the charge of the Rev. David Bostwick. And then Mr. Smith adds what I want you particularly to note: "In the front, toward the street, between two long windows, is an inscription, gilt and cut in black slate, six feet in length." I wish you to note this because there is a singular coincidence which I have discovered, which links that fine old Wall Street building of 1748 with our own history, and the removal of the later building (its successor) to Jersey City. That tablet was not of black *slate*, as Mr. Wm. Smith says, but of black *marble*, as I will show you presently. He does not give the inscription. But the inscription was this—it was written in Latin:

Auspicante Deo  
Hanc Ædem  
Cultui Divino Sacram  
In perpetuam  
Celebrando  
A. D. MDCCXIX  
Primo fundatam  
Denuo penitus Reparatam  
Ampliolem et Ornatiorem  
A. D. MDCCXLVIII  
Constructam

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\* Randolph's Notes in MS.

Neo-Eboracensis Presbyteriani

In suum et suorum usum

Condentes

In hac Votiva Tabula

D. D. D. Q.

. . . . .

Concordia, Amore,

Necnon Fidei, cultus et morum

Puritatem

Suffulta clariusq' Exornata

Annunte Christo

Longum perduret in Ævum.

That is,—

Under the good hand of God,

This temple

Sacred to the perpetual celebration

of Divine Worship,

First erected

In the year of our Lord 1719,

and afterwards thoroughly reconstructed

and built larger and more beautiful

A.D. 1748,

The Presbyterians of New York,

Building it

For the use of themselves and their children,

In this votive tablet

Give, Devote and Dedicate.

. . . . .

May it, supported and

Far more illustriously adorned

By concord, love, and also by

Purity of Faith, of worship and of discipline

Under Christ's favor

Endure through a long distant future.

A beautiful inscription and a prayer truly answered. Now for the coincidence. This building stood until 1810 (sixty-two years), and then gave place to the present building with whose reconstructed walls we now sit. In putting up the building of 1810 in Wall Street, however, or afterward, that old tablet, praying for a long continuance of divine worship

in the edifice, seems to have been mislaid until it was forgotten. But when the church was sold to our trustees, to be transferred to Jersey City, suddenly the old tablet (now seen to be of black marble) is brought to light. And, in searching the records of the trustees of the First Presbyterian Church of New York, I find that at the very same meeting of the Board, April 22, 1844, which records that the contract for the sale of the building to the Trustees of the First Presbyterian Church of Jersey City had been signed, there follows immediately this notice, viz.: "The Treasurer reported that he had found in the old church-yard grounds in Wall Street, a Tablet of black marble executed in 1748 with the following Latin inscription" (which is there given as above), "which tablet he had caused to be removed to the new grounds, and recommends that the same be inserted in the Tower of the new church in Fifth Avenue." It was inserted, as the present pastor,\* the Rev. Wm. M. Paxton, D.D., informs me, in the pastor's study in the church, and there it remains to this day. Thus, at the very time when the church building was about to be demolished and then transported in a renewed form for a new generation, the old prayer written in marble ninety-six years before, comes to light as a witness that the prayer was heard and answered. And now I must state another singular fact regarding Wall Street church and Whitefield. While Whitefield was in Philadelphia preaching on one occasion at night, there stood a young boy holding a lantern to give light to the preacher. The boy became absorbed in the preacher's theme, and when Whitefield, at length threw the fervor of his soul into one of his tremendous appeals, the boy, overcome, dropped the lantern, which was dashed to pieces. That boy, then converted, was afterward the celebrated Dr. John Rodgers, a native of Boston, called in 1765 from the Presbyterian Church at St. George's, Delaware, to be the pastor of the Wall Street church, and under whose abundant labors that

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\* A.D. 1876.

church became doubled and even trebled in attendants, and who is styled the father of Presbyterianism in New York. A grandson of his, as you know, and others of his descendants were, until their removal elsewhere, worshippers with us in this church almost from its organization. Years after the occurrence above narrated, and when Dr. Rodgers was settled, Whitefield recalled, it is said, the circumstance to his recollection.

During the existence of the building put up in 1748, the numbers of Presbyterians had so much increased, that soon after Dr. Rodgers' installation, a new brick building was erected and a congregation gathered as a Collegiate church with that of Wall Street. This building was placed on the triangular lot at the corner of Nassau and Beekman Streets, called "The Vineyard." For funds to build this church, Dr. Rodgers solicited subscriptions "literally from door to door." It was known as the "Brick Meeting-House," and was dedicated January 1, 1768. During the war of the Revolution the Wall Street church became a barrack for soldiers, and the "Brick Meeting-House" a hospital where scenes, terrible to relate, are recorded to have happened.\*

Some time after the war the Wall Street congregation purchased a lot alongside of the church and erected a charity school under the care of the Session and trustees. It went into operation in 1799, and was supported by annual collections, and was finally placed under the Public School Society.

The Rev. Jas. Wilson, made colleague of Dr. Rodgers in 1785, remained two years, and in 1789 the Rev. Samuel Miller was ordained and installed; and he, with Dr. L. McKnight and Dr. John Rodgers, the senior pastor, were Collegiate pastors of the two churches. In 1798 a third Collegiate church was built in Rutgers Street, with the Rev. Philip Milledoler, D.D., as the first pastor, with the understanding that he should serve that church entirely. So things con-

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\* See Disosway, p. 145, *et seq.*



tinued until the year 1809, when the collegiate plan being found burdensome, the churches amicably separated. Dr. Samuel Miller was pastor of the Wall Street church and the Rev. Gardiner Spring was soon settled over the Brick church, Dr. Rodgers continuing his connection with both. And Dr. McKnight voluntarily resigned.\*

Here once more I pause, to resume this history on the next Sabbath.

Beloved Brethren: As we review this picture and repeat the many honored names of the past, what a deep impression we get of the changeableness of all that is here. We see in this present day, as in all the previous history of God's people, that the "fathers pass away and the prophets do not live forever." And yet, how true it is, that the faith of God's real people is always the same, and its fruits as manifest at one time as at another. And how God's people are linked together by their distinctive principles, by their character and by their deeds of piety, from generation to generation.

"Let saints below in concert sing  
With those to glory gone;  
For all the servants of our King  
In earth and heaven are one.

"One family—we dwell in Him—  
One church, above, beneath,  
Though now divided by the stream,  
The narrow stream of death.

"One army of the living God,  
To His command we bow.  
Part of the host have crossed the flood  
And part are crossing now."

Yes; passing on to the Kingdom prepared. Here, for a time only to do our work in our own day and to do it in

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\* Disosway, p. 149, says, "Dr. McKnight voluntarily continued his connection with both churches." This is doubtless a typographical error by repetition of the previous lines about Dr. Rodgers.

faith and love and hope. Let us gather zeal and courage from those whose labors we have been contemplating, to do our part faithfully; and here, in this city, where we inherit the labors of those gone before us, let us show by our deeds that we are indeed followers of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

## SERMON III.

“And I saw no temple therein : for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it : for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.”—REV. xxi. 22, 23.

THIS is one of the texts which not only convey a truth, but teach another truth by contrast. The description is that of the heavenly city, the symbol of the heavenly rule over the kingdom of God on the renewed earth. And the meaning is that our condition will be so changed that the glorified saints will not need, as now, those appliances for social worship and for near approach to the King of glory, but will have direct and immediate vision of and access to Him. The truth by contrast is that in our present state of preparatory training, and of “absence from the Lord,” we do need these helps. And hence all through the experience of the Church we have these temples for God’s worship, and they have a history—a history often of the deepest interest—a history of man’s labor and self-denial and liberality, and also of God’s gracious favors—a history which will be bright with holy gladness forever as it is remembered that “this and that man was born there.” The memory of them will not die out then in the future, but will live, and God will be praised for these aids to us while passing on to glory.

Let us, then, turn again to review further God’s mercy toward this church where He has gathered us.

On the last Sabbath I gave you an account of the successful attempt to revive the First Presbyterian Church in Jersey City in the year 1844, with the antecedents of that effort. This seemed to render needful a summary, in part, of the history of the First Presbyterian Church in New

York, including the early beginnings of that congregation in 1707; their organization in 1717; the building of the first edifice in Wall Street in 1719—its enlargement in 1748; the subsequent collegiate history with the Brick church and then with the Rutgers Street church, under the pastoral care of Drs. Rodgers, McKnight, Miller, and Milledoler, up to 1810, when the collegiate relation ceased. Throughout all this time the Wall Street church building of 1748, already described, remained. The time was now arrived when the congregation in Wall Street determined to rebuild again, and this time on a still larger and handsomer scale. This brings us to the erection in New York in 1810 of the present building in which we now are. This edifice was in the course of re-erection from December 9, 1809, to August 11, 1811. The congregation meantime worshipped in the old French Huguenot church in Pine Street. In May, 1811, when the Presbyterian church was nearly finished, Dr. Rodgers died, and Dr. Samuel Miller was left the sole pastor. The new edifice was built by the voluntary contributions of the members of the congregation, and is described as a "costly, noble, and large brown-stone edifice." It cost forty-seven thousand dollars. To give some idea of the appearance of the building as it then stood in Wall Street, I am indebted to our elder, Hon. B. F. Randolph, who has gathered the following particulars from an article published March 20, 1830, in the *New York Mirror*, which gives a brief account of six of the early churches of New York City, accompanied by small engravings of the same.\* One of these represents the Wall Street Presbyterian church "with the iron fence in front. The front of the church was then as it is now. The steeple was different. There was a base for the steeple, extending from the second-story window in front as now, above the ridge of the roof. Above this were two cupola-shaped structures, one over the other, of which the upper one was the smaller, each having six, or perhaps eight,

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\* *New York Mirror*, vol. 7, p. 89.

windows, with a column between each two of the windows. Over the upper cupola was a small dome, with a rod extending upward from the centre, on which were first a ball, then an ornament resembling a star with rays, and over that a vane. The fence and yard were level with the street, and the entrance to the church seems to have been level with the street also." The *Mirror* article states that "the edifice of 1810 is 95 feet in length and 68 feet in width. It is built of brown freestone, with pillars of the same in demi-relief, with Corinthian capitals." . . . "The yard is small but neat, and is inclosed with an iron railing. The congregation is under the pastoral charge of Rev. Mr. Phillips."

Dr. Miller continued to be the pastor for three years afterward, when, in 1813, he was called to the chair of Ecclesiastical History in the Theological Seminary newly established at Princeton, New Jersey. He was succeeded first by the Rev. Philip Melancthon Whelpley, D.D., in 1815, who died very young in 1824, and then by the Rev. Wm. W. Phillips, who was called from the Pearl Street church, New York, and installed January, 1826. Dr. Phillips was still the pastor when the building was removed in 1844 to Jersey City.

This fine edifice of 1810 remained an ornament to the city of New York until 1834. On September 13th, in that year, from some unknown cause, it took fire and was partially consumed. You see from this that the building, as we received it, was the church of 1810 repaired. The following particulars of that fire, gathered by B. F. Randolph, Esq., are of interest. The *Journal of Commerce*, in an article copied into the *New York Observer*, September 20, 1834, stated that "On Saturday, September 13th, at about half-past five o'clock in the afternoon, the elegant church in Wall Street, known as the First Presbyterian Church, was discovered to be on fire between the ceiling and the roof, as indicated by smoke issuing through fissures of the latter." When the writer reached the upper window of the residence of a friend, which overlooked and nearly adjoined the church, he says: "A sheet of flame was streaming through the roof

a little to the east of the ridge and about two-thirds of the distance from the steeple to the rear of the building. For a considerable extent in every direction from this flame smoke was pressing upward through the shingles, and ere long the whole body of the roof was a mass of living fire, sending forth volumes of flame. Several thousands had congregated and were gazing with intense interest. The fire ascended the steeple both within and without ; the bell in the meantime being rung until the rope burnt off and portions of the roof fell through the ceiling into the body of the church. The steeple burned with more fury than the roof. The bell tumbled through the floors." The top of the cupola was but partially burned when the timbers that supported it gave way, and it came down with a heavy crash into the body of the church. The woodwork was destroyed. "The walls stood firm, and the stonework of the tower extended to the height of perhaps 60 feet. The insurance is \$20,000. Most of the furniture was saved, such as chandeliers, cushions, and books," including the Bible and Psalm Book, valued as having been used in the time of Dr. Rodgers. "The origin of the fire is unknown, no fire having been carried into the building, to the knowledge of the sexton, for two months."

Hon. Rynier H. Veghte, of Somerville, New Jersey, then residing in New York, was, at the time, connected with the fire department of the city of New York, and aided in the attempt to save the church. The longest ladder reached the base of the steeple, and with hose in hand Mr. Veghte ascended the ladder after Mr. George Robinson. As the latter was entering the building from the top of the ladder, Mr. Veghte, from his lower position, discovered the extent of the destruction already occasioned by the fire to the roof, and hastening to Mr. Robinson, succeeded in drawing him back just in time. They descended instantly to the street, when the roof fell in, and then the roof came crashing down, falling outward toward the street. The roof, steeple, and windows were entirely destroyed.



Within one year after this disaster the church was rebuilt at a cost, as I find from the books of the Trustees, far exceeding the insurance of \$20,000, and renovated into the beautiful edifice which, nine years later, we received at their hands, and which we now occupy.

The great fire of 1835 in New York, did not reach it. It was reopened for divine service, as we find by a notice in the *New York Observer* of September 5, 1835, on Sunday, September 6, 1835, on the very anniversary of the day when it was last occupied a year before. When completed it presented in Wall Street exactly the same appearance as it does now in Jersey City, with the following exceptions: The building was then longer by one window; there was in Wall Street no basement such as we now have. And the upholstery was of a light blue, which we also used for a number of years and then substituted eight years ago the present drab color. And the pulpit in Wall Street was of the same shape and appearance as it used to be here previous to the year 1868.

This brings the history of the Wall Street church up to the year 1844, and its transfer to this city.

The reason which led to the sale of the building was, of course, the determination of the congregation in New York to remove to the upper part of the city. For a number of years the tide of population, and especially of attendants in the churches, had been tending up-town. And the draught made upon the churches began now to be more and more seriously felt. In the case of the Wall Street church there were also additional reasons. I find from the records, that in rebuilding their edifice after the fire, they had expended more than double what was received by insurance. This difference had been raised by loans, and it lay as a debt upon the congregation. Besides, owing to the diminishing numbers in attendance the expense of maintaining the church and meeting the interest, occasioned for several years an annual deficit of over \$4,000; until the debt amounted to what they call (and truly so for those times), the enor-

mous sum of \$42,000. This led to the determination to remove. It was hoped that the sale of the property would pay the debt, buy the new ground on Fifth Avenue, and build the church. The result was a great disappointment in this respect. But that was the expectation. As already intimated, up to May, 1844 (a full month after our Committee had been appointed to buy the church if possible, and to transport it), the congregation of the Wall Street church had by no means decided to relinquish the old material and to build entirely anew. Under that date I find the New York Building Committee, Messrs. Geo. B. Butler and A. R. Thompson, with the architect, proposing a plan for building a house of worship in either Gothic or Grecian style, in an enlarged and much improved form. It was to be 125 x 65 feet, with a tower 225 feet in height, and was to be constructed from the *old material*, at a cost of \$34,000. The Building Committee presented the proposal, but made no recommendation. So the matter stood until the meeting of the New York Trustees, June 20, 1844, when the Building Committee from Jersey City presented the formal offer to buy and transport the edifice. The proposal, after its reference to the New York Building Committee, was finally accepted. The contract was signed Wednesday, July 10, 1844, on their part by J. Kearney Rodgers, President of the Board of Trustees in New York, and on our part by Oliver S. Strong, President of the Board of Trustees in Jersey City. The price of the building as it stood was not at first agreed upon. The offer on their part was to sell at \$3,300. On our part the Committee was authorized July 3, 1844, to offer \$3,000, but if \$3,300 was demanded, to take it for whatever it could be bought and also to contract for the removal of the church when purchased, and for its erection in Jersey City. The price finally agreed upon in the contract was \$3,000. By a record in New York of August 23, 1844, the sale included the following items, viz.: "The building, the iron railing on the east side of the building, the stone wall connected with the church and said railing and also the coping and flag-

ging, the fixtures of the said church, including stoves, cushions, lamp, chandeliers, and carpets; it being understood that the tablets, bell, iron safe, and communion service, are exempted from the sale"; and the cash was to be paid on the 20th of August of that year. This money was advanced by Messrs. Dudley S. Gregory and David Henderson on a bond given them by the Trustees of the Jersey City church. It was also stipulated in the contract "that the purchasers shall remove the building and the rubbish created by taking down the same by the first day of September, 1844"; *i. e.*, in about eight weeks after the contract was signed.

To complete the history of the case as to New York, I should add just here that the First Presbyterian Church of New York, having now disposed of their Wall Street edifice, of course decided to build entirely anew, and that the sale of all the Wall Street property brought the sum of \$148,000. The corner-stone of the new church at the corner of Fifth Avenue and Twelfth Street was laid Sept. 17, 1845, just after the removal and erection of the Wall Street building to Jersey City, the congregation worshipping meantime in the Union Theological Seminary Chapel in University Place. The church was finished at a cost of \$55,000, and was dedicated Jan. 11, 1846, Dr. Phillips delivering the dedication sermon from Ps. cxxiv. 1-3, "If it had not been the Lord, who was on our side," etc.\*

This is the place to state, in reference to the legal aspects of the sale, that it has been rumored that there was some legal objection raised against the sale of the Wall Street property to persons out of the State of New York, and that a decision was rendered establishing the legality of the sale. If there had been such a question raised and such a decision made, it would have been interesting and desirable to have it on record. And I was desirous of discovering the facts. But after various inquiries in the proper places, I do not find any stable ground for such a rumor. And I am in-

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\* Disosway's "Earliest Churches," p. 142.

formed by Judge B. F. Randolph, who has kindly made the search, that if any such decision was rendered it has not been recorded. The only two facts which I have been enabled to discover having any bearing on this subject, are in the records of the trustees of the First Presbyterian Church of New York. The first is under date of June 20, 1844—at the same meeting when our trustees made offer to buy the church. It is there stated, after referring our application to the Building Committee, that the Committee advised, “That a petition be made to the Chancellor of New York in relation to the sale of the church and grounds in Wall Street, praying such an amendment as the Counsel of the Board may advise, and for a confirmation of the sales already made at auction.” The other is under date of April 8, 1846, where the form which had been adopted for a deed of pews in the new church building on Fifth Avenue, to such as had owned pews in Wall Street, is recorded. In that form of deed these words occur :

“WHEREAS, The corporation of the First Presbyterian Church of the City of New York, upon their application to the Court of Chancery of the State of New York for that purpose first had, and the order of said Court thereupon granted, did sell and dispose of the property of said corporation, situated on Wall and Nassau Streets in said city, and with the money received from the sale thereof did purchase other property on the Fifth Avenue of said city and erect thereon their present church”; “And, whereas,” etc.

This shows that *some* application for leave to sell was made. But it is believed to have been the application made under the ordinary requirements in such cases, and not because there was any special doubt or difficulty in this case which called for a special decision.

I return now to the re-erection of the edifice in Jersey City. The sale being now effected, everything was ready for the transfer. The next point was where to put the building. It was not at once decided to place it where it now stands.

On the contrary, the first idea was to set it facing on Sussex Street. And for this purpose, as the Jersey Associates had so liberally provided for church buildings in the way already mentioned, and as the Presbyterians had resigned the ground already donated to them to the Reformed Dutch congregation, application was made by Messrs. D. S. Gregory and Henry Southmayd for a like favor now. This application was very generously granted, on condition that the trustees of the church should make the formal application and give an acknowledgment of the receipt of the lots, so that no new donation of land should be expected for the same denomination. The grant of land *this* time was not, however, of four lots, as had been the case previously to the other churches, but of two lots, it being understood that two other lots besides should be given by friends of the enterprise. These friends were found in the persons of Mr. D. S. Gregory and Mr. David Henderson. Each of these gentlemen gave one lot. Thus four lots were obtained facing on Sussex Street. Soon, however, this purpose was altered, and it was decided to make the church face on Washington Street. But on this spot the Associates had no lots. An exchange, therefore, was effected. Messrs. Henderson and Gregory held four lots on Washington Street (viz., Nos. 41, 43, 45, and 47) adjoining the public square. They each gave one lot. In addition to these, Mr. Gregory gave a deed to the church for the other two lots (Nos. 43 and 45), and, by request of the Trustees of the church, the Associates then gave in exchange to Mr. Gregory for them, two lots (Nos. 27 and 29) on Sussex Street. Thus the four lots on Washington Street, with only a light ground-rent of \$60 per annum, owned by the estate of W. W. Woolsey, and which had always existed upon the property, became, by three deeds, the property of the Presbyterian Church.

But even now the location was not fixed. It was next thought best, if possible, to place the church on Grand Street, especially as, two years before, the citizens, by a



vote, had acceded to a proposal granting leave to the authorities to modify the public square. Hence, on the 28th of April, 1844, it was resolved by the Trustees "that the President of the Board be authorized to address a communication to the Mayor and Common Council of Jersey City, proposing an exchange of the property on Washington corner of Sussex Street, now owned by the church, for the southwest corner of the public square, bounded by Washington and Grand Streets, for the purpose of erecting their church thereon." But this proposal produced a loud clamor. Improper motives were insinuated. And the result was that the Trustees, under date of May 3, 1844, directed the President to withdraw the application, and the following letter was addressed to the Mayor and Common Council of Jersey City :

"TO THE MAYOR AND COMMON COUNCIL OF JERSEY CITY :

"*Gentlemen* :—By direction of the Board of Trustees of the Presbyterian Church, I respectfully beg leave to withdraw the proposition made by them in the communication addressed to you on the 24th ultimo, in reference to an exchange of a portion of the public square for an equal portion of ground belonging to them. The Trustees having learned, with regret, that in making this proposition improper motives have been imputed to them in certain quarters, and being unwilling that the object in which they, with others of their fellow-citizens, are engaged should be connected with anything which might, in the slightest degree, lead to an excited and perhaps uncharitable discussion amongst any portion of the community, they take this the earliest opportunity to put the vexed question at rest. The Trustees, however, respectfully beg leave to state, that in making the said application to the Common Council they neither asked a favor from, nor sought to obtain any advantage over, the people ; but believing that the proposed modification of the public square had long been considered by a majority of the citizens as a desirable improvement of



the same, they merely renewed a proposition which had been acceded to by the city authorities about two years ago, after having been sanctioned by a vote of the people.

“ I am, Gentlemen,

“ Very respectfully,

“ Your obedient servant,

“ OLIVER S. STRONG, *President.*”\*

This ended the proposed change and brought the matter back to the former purpose, and the church was built where it now stands.

The transfer was a great undertaking, and was watched by many with marked interest. It was done under the supervision of Andrew Clerk, Esq., the architect whom you have all so well known as a resident among us and member of this congregation.† All the materials were brought over the ferry in carts by Mr. Richard Bumsted, of Jersey City, the builder, who still lives among us. An arrangement was entered into with the Ferry Co. to transport the materials at five cents a load. And it may give you some idea of the work to know that the company issued 7,456 tickets (\$372.80) for this purpose. The process of removing began in July and ended in September, 1844. The faced stone was regularly marked as it was taken down, and after being brought over was deposited in the lot now occupied by the “ Club House,”‡ and each stone as needed was put up again in its original position. The stone containing the tablet marking the date of erection was, however, a new piece. It was brought from Belleville in the winter, and such was the state of the roads that the truck lay mired for a considerable time until assistance could be obtained to extricate it. The inscription was cut on the ground here. Mr. Andrew Clerk, the architect, had been appointed on July 9, 1844, to superintend the whole work of erection, and the church was

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\* No date in the printed form, but doubtless of May 3, 1844.

† Since deceased, 1886.

‡ A.D. 1876.

built upon the basis of a plan submitted by him at the same meeting. At the close of his labors, a very gratifying resolution of approval was tendered him for the care and success which had been shown in the work, and also for the liberal terms on which he gave his services. The contractor for the mason work was Mr. Wm. Bumsted, of Jersey City, and the carpenter work was assigned to Mr. John M. Trimble, of New York. The contract required in both cases that the work should be finished by April 15, 1845. The whole contract for transporting and re-erecting amounted to \$13,394. This was exclusive of the basement, which it was decided to add to the original building.

The work of erection having been started, Messrs. Strong, Gregory, and Henderson were appointed, Sept. 11, 1844, a committee to make arrangements for the laying of the corner-stone. And on Monday afternoon, the 30th of September, 1844, the ceremony took place. In the previous week there had appeared, in the public prints, the following article :

“‘THE NEW PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH’

in Jersey City is in the process of erection, and will be a substantial stone edifice of imposing appearance. Its dimensions are 62 by 72 feet inside the main room ; the tower and vestibule occupying 18 feet in front. The height of the steeple from the ground will be 180 feet. Taken as a whole, it will not be exceeded by any church in this State in proportions and beauty. The contract for the work is in the hands of faithful men. The site is fronting west on Washington Street, which street is 80 feet wide ; south, along Sussex Street, north, on one of the public squares, and is surrounded by shade trees of considerable size. The ground was given by the Associates of the Jersey Company and by two of our citizens. The Trustees are making preparations to lay the corner-stone, with religious ceremony, on Monday afternoon, the 30th inst. . . . The first church erected by the Presbyterians in this place . . . was transferred to the

Reformed Dutch Church, which congregation now occupies it, and, we are happy to say, are in a prosperous condition. As the city and suburbs have more than quadrupled in inhabitants since then, there being now about 5,700 inhabitants therein, we hope the new undertaking will be blest with permanent success. It will be recollected that the materials are those of the Wall Street church, New York, and when rebuilt in Jersey City it will present the same appearance as the old church, will contain the same pews, and be furnished in the same manner. . . . It will contain, in addition, a commodious and dry basement for church and school purposes, and the steeple will be altered so as to admit a clock for the benefit of the city." \*

I have searched diligently, but can find no published account of the laying of the corner-stone. But from the testimony of living witnesses and other sources of information, I have ascertained the following facts: On the day appointed, Sept. 30, 1844, the ceremony took place. A platform was erected on the south side of the building site, where the exercises were conducted. The Rev. Samuel Miller, D.D., of Princeton Theological Seminary, who, as pastor of the church, had laid the corner-stone of the building in New York in 1810, was expected, as had been publicly announced, to perform the same service on this occasion. He was, however, detained; and the Rev. John Johnstone, the pastor in Jersey City, took Dr. Miller's place, and laid the stone. It was the stone immediately under the right-hand pillar as you enter the middle door. Within the stone was deposited a wide-mouthed jar, made for the purpose, at the pottery in Jersey City, and in which were deposited newspapers and periodicals of the day together with a number of new silver coins of the year obtained from the U. S. Mint by Mr. Oliver S. Strong. Several addresses were made, and prayer, of course, was offered, including that of dedication; but I have not been able to ascertain by whom these services were performed.

Thus the corner-stone was laid, to the hearty satisfaction

of those engaged in the enterprise. It was to them a new pledge of the speedy fulfilment of their wishes.

Here I must pause for the present. In one more discourse I hope to complete this history with an account of the church's completion, its growth in members, its officers, and other incidents.

To how many has this sacred enclosure been a place of peace and blessedness! The scenes which then occurred are gone by. And many who had a part in those scenes are gone from here. May God so bless His word here preached to us that we shall meet the beloved ones of God, gone before to the land of rest and glory. Let us rejoice that amidst all the strange and unexpected changes among our Lord's churches here on earth, prosperous or adverse, nothing is unforeseen by Him. Men's plans and efforts are all under His control to establish His Gospel and to provide for the edification and comfort of His people in Gospel truth. The opposition of men or their concurrence all fall within His purposes. And however weak may be the incipient efforts to build for His praise, or however intermitted and interrupted the progress, He can exceed His people's hopes, and "bring forth the topstone with shoutings of Grace, grace unto it."

## SERMON IV.

"He reared up the court round about the tabernacle and the altar, and set up the hanging of the court-gate : so Moses finished the work. Then a cloud covered the tent of the congregation, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle."—EXODUS xl. 33, 34.

"I will wash mine hands in innocency : so will I compass Thine altar, O Lord. That I may publish with the voice of thanksgiving, and tell of all Thy wondrous works. Lord, I have loved the habitation of Thy house, and the place where Thine honor dwelleth."—PSALM xxvi. 6-8.

"How amiable are Thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts ! My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the Lord : my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God. Blessed are they that dwell in Thy house : they will be still praising Thee. For a day in Thy courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness."—PSALM lxxxiv. 1, 2, 4, 11.

"In the fourth year was the foundation of the house of the Lord laid, in the month Zif : And in the eleventh year, in the month Bul (which is the eighth month) was the house finished throughout all the parts thereof, and according to all the fashion of it. So was he seven years in building it."—I KINGS vi. 37, 38.

I HAVE quoted these passages of Scripture that you may see how God's faithful people and God himself also both turn with delight to the earthly tabernacles built for His worship. In the passage from Exodus you observe how plainly the heart of man and the heart of God unite in their deep interest in the place. The work on man's side, long continued in preparing it step by step, is finished, and the house built for God is ready for His occupancy. And man waits and watches for God's entrance. He does not need to wait long. At once God marks His approval of the event in a ready entrance into this abode prepared for Him by human hands. No sooner is all ready, than "the cloud covers the tent of the congregation, and the glory of the Lord fills the tabernacle." So true is it that although "heaven is God's throne and the earth is His footstool," yea, even that "the heaven of heavens cannot contain Him," yet there have been spots on this earth where God has loved

to dwell, and which "He has desired for His habitation." And note, too, in the other texts, how, from that time forward, both turn to the same places, the house of God at Shiloh, and its successor, the temple at Jerusalem, with the liveliest interest. On the one hand, mark the longing of David (the true representative in this respect of all God's people) for that sacred place. "Lord! I have loved the habitation of Thy house and the place where Thine honor dwelleth." See how he delights in these earthly places where God makes His abode (for that is the true meaning of the word 'tabernacles'): "How amiable are Thy tabernacles, O Lord of Hosts; my soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the Lord. My heart and my flesh cry out for the living God. A day spent in Thy courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than to dwell in the courts of wickedness." And, on the other hand, see how the Lord reciprocates this fervor of zeal in His people toward the places of His manifested presence, in His notice of the very materials of its construction and of the progress toward completion of His earthly habitation. Its very stones are precious in His sight. For you see from the last text above given, that the Holy Spirit does not hesitate to take space in the Holy Scripture to record the laying of the foundations of the temple of the Lord, and then also to mark how it progressed in building, the time which its building occupied, and its completion in all its parts. Surely, then, there must be a good service rendered in noting these things in other earthly temples of the Lord.

Let us, then, turn once more, and see how this work prospered with us.

I have already brought the history up to the laying of the corner-stone in Jersey City. From that time the building went forward without interruption until it was completed in the following May (1845). It was erected exactly as the building had stood in Wall Street, with the following exceptions:—1. The basement. This had not existed at all in



New York, and was added to the building by the Jersey City congregation, at a cost of \$842. It must be noted here, also, that the six pillars in the lecture-room (viz.: those on the two sides), are relics from the old Reformed Dutch church (South), at the corner of Liberty and Nassau Streets, New York, which was bought and transformed into the New York City Post-office.\* The three middle pillars were new. The audience-room in the basement was originally not so deep by seven feet as it is now; and there was, besides, only one small room in the southeast corner, which served for the pastor's study and also a trustees' room; the rest of the space in the basement being unoccupied, except when, for some years, it had rooms fitted up in it for the sexton. The fine study and church parlor which we have now, were put in a number of years afterward. 2. The length of the building was shortened by one window, or seven feet, for the purpose, I believe, of bringing the building within the lots appropriated to it. The width was diminished one and a half feet. 3. The mason informs me that the steeple was exactly as it stood in New York, with the exception of the changes necessary to introduce the clock, and that it remained unfinished all the winter of 1844-45, but was completed before the dedication. 4. The former copper gas-pipes were excluded and sold, and the handsome chandeliers were altered to hold oil-lamps. This continued until 1852, when the Jersey City Gas Co., then just established, introduced their light by putting in new pipes, and again utilizing the fine old bronze chandeliers on the reopening of the church on that occasion, Sunday evening, December 19, 1852. The opportunity was used by the pastor for preaching a sermon from our Lord's words in John viii. 12: "I am the light of the world." 5. The clock was added, and the bell in the steeple was new: the sum of \$500 having been voted toward it, which was afterward increased to \$622 when hung. The clock was put up by Mr.

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\* Statement by Hon. D. S. Gregory and by Mr. Erastus Randall, of Jersey City.

S. Penfield, at a cost of \$450. The money for it was raised by a general subscription at first, and afterward supplemented by a grant from the City Council with the understanding that the bell should be rung in cases of fire.

Two sad accidents marred the satisfaction with which this building was seen slowly rising. The first occurred in New York during the taking down of the building. Contrary to the order of Mr. Bumsted the contractor, who was obliged to be absent in the early hours of that morning, owing to the hurrying of the work on this side of the river, the workmen had carried up a heavy chain cable to the top of the wall for the purpose of pulling the wall down. This chain they had coiled up, leaving the end of the chain hanging over. Two men stood within the coil. By some means the end of the chain commenced running. Nothing could stop it, and the two men were swept irresistibly to the ground. Mr. Thomas McDowell, a young Scotchman of promise, who had written of his welfare to his mother only the day before, was dashed on his head to the stone pavement. He lingered at the city hospital, on Broadway and Duane Street, unconscious, except for a short interval, until the next day, when he died. Mr. Robert Canning was dashed in his fall across the iron railing and caught on his arm, which was thus torn from the shoulder socket. After much suffering he still lived, and united with the church at the next communion. A collection was ordered by the church in his aid, and permanent employment procured for him as flagman on the New Jersey Railroad, where he served for many years afterward, and died among us a few years ago. The second accident occurred on this side of the river, when the church was nearly finished. One of the carpenters, whose name I have not been able to obtain, was hurled, while putting up the gutter, from the scaffolding to the ground, and died almost immediately.

Measures were taken, while the building was in progress, to secure appropriate church music. Mr. D. M. Holdridge was then chorister. And to aid in this object an offer was

made by Mr. D. S. Gregory to put up, with the aid of the ladies, an organ. Mr. Jardine, of New York, was the builder. The instrument was put in at a cost of \$2,000, toward which the ladies raised \$375. It was understood to be the property of Mr. Gregory, and so recorded. But by his liberality, at the request of the congregation, it was used by them gratuitously until the debt for it was liquidated. It is proper to mention here, also, that to carry on and complete the building \$12,000 were advanced by Mr. D. S. Gregory and Mr. David Henderson. A mortgage on the building to that amount, at first for five years and then for ten, at six per cent., was issued by the Trustees. The final payment of these debts in full in the year 1864, when a determined effort was made to clear off all incumbrances (as will be afterward more fully stated), is within your recollection. The whole cost of the church, including the basement, was \$21,385.

It was not without urging that the building was erected within a reasonable time. The work was delayed after repeated protestations from the Trustees. And I find by the record that it was not until the threat was held out to the carpenters and masons that the penalty for non-fulfilment of contract would be exacted, added to the importunities of the architect and the offer of an additional douceur of \$50, that the work was expedited. At length the top stone was put on, the inside work was finished, the building was completed, and the house erected for God's worship was ready for use. The public were invited to the dedication services by the following notice in the public prints:

“PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

“The Trustees have made arrangements to have this edifice dedicated to the worship of Almighty God on the next Sabbath. On which occasion the venerable Dr. Miller, of Princeton, now in the vigor of a ripe old age, will officiate at the morning service. . . . Dr. Miller was at the dedication of the church in New York in 1810, . . . and his

life has been spared to see the same building *shipped* to his own State. Dr. Phillips, long the pastor of the old church in New York, will preach on this occasion in the afternoon, and the Rev. Dr. Sprague, of Albany, will preach in the evening. Altogether it will probably be one of the most interesting occasions that Jersey City has witnessed for some time."

The dedication of the church took place according to this programme on Sunday, May 25, 1845. Overflowing houses attended the services. As had been advertised, the Rev. Dr. Miller, who had been the pastor thirty-four years before, when the building was first erected, preached the sermon. The Rev. Dr. Phillips, as was very appropriate, preached in the afternoon. As an incident of the evening service, when Dr. Sprague, of Albany, preached, I may mention that he referred to a serious loss which the church had met in February, four months before, in the death of one of three excellent women (of whom this church has had so many to be thankful for during its history), Mrs. Margaret Strong, wife of Elder Strong. He referred to her consistent Christian activity, and to her helpfulness in setting forward this church, whose dedication she did not live to see. And he especially mentioned that it was chiefly by her zeal that the money was raised by subscription to furnish the communion set (which has been so long used in this church),—a fact which we should have no means of knowing but from this source.

Dr. Miller's discourse in the morning excited great attention. Necessarily, he was obliged to make reference to the former Presbyterian organization and building which had been transferred to the Reformed Dutch Church. This caused a very considerable commotion. Almost immediately the Consistory of the Dutch church addressed a letter to the Session, asking friendly conference and stating that Dr. Miller's statements were unintentionally not exactly in accordance with the facts. A committee was appointed by

the Session to visit Dr. Miller in Princeton. He asked for a plain statement of the errors and said he would correct any that could be pointed out. This request for an exhibit of the errors was sent, with a fraternal letter, to the Consistory. But there the matter dropped.

I have already given you in full the facts of this case as exhibited in official documents, and there is no need for any further reference to the matter.

The work was thus finished and all went on prosperously. Old occupants of pews in Wall Street, delighted to see the old walls once more standing, came to the opening service, and again and again came afterward to see their old home in God's house in its familiar features, and to sit in their old pews. The church itself was an imposing feature in the young and growing city. The congregation was united and was increasing, and all seemed fair in God's good providence for a useful and honorable career.

The first communion service in the new building was held on Sunday afternoon, June 29, 1845, just one year after the first communion, held in the Lyceum, after the organization. And on that occasion they had the pleasure of welcoming ten new members—eight on certificate and two on confession of their faith. Their names are as follows: D. M. Holdridge, Frances Holdridge, Justus Slater (afterward elder), Esther Slater, Robert George, Ann Jane George, Robert Canning, and Margaret Ann Canning. These were on certificate; and on confession—Aaron Bonnell and Phebe A. Bonnell.

Everything, as I said, seemed now to be prosperous, when, alas! God having brought the church to this happy condition, a sad event almost immediately clouded all hearts and foreboded almost irreparable damage. I allude to the tragic death of Mr. David Henderson, the chief abettor of this enterprise.

There are those now living who can remember how eager Mr. Henderson was to get the church completed, so that it could be dedicated and he could be at liberty to be absent



in the mountains upon business. So eager was he for this that he sometimes detained and fed the workmen at his own house in order that they might continue working at extra hours for expediting the building. And yet, alas! so mysterious are the ways of God, so uncertain the calculation of man. That visit was to throw all into gloom. The dedication service had hardly passed when he went away into the Adirondacks. He returned and stayed for a short time, until August, and meantime his familiar face was seen for one Sabbath or two in his pew. Then almost immediately, accompanied by his pastor and his own family, he went again into the mountains. All went well until September 3d. On Tuesday, the day previous, Mr. Johnstone, his pastor, left him to return home, bearing with him the last writing that Mr. Henderson ever penned—a letter of condolence to his friend, Mr. Gregory, on the death of Mr. Gregory's sister, Mrs. Catlin. The day after Mr. Johnstone left, Mr. Henderson, accompanied by his guide, John Cheney, went into the woods to what is now known as "Calamity Pond." He had always had a dread of firearms. And yet, strange to say, as the time for the meal approached, he took off his belt with its loaded pistol, and laid it down hastily, with the hammer resting on the cap, upon the rock at his feet. The blow on the hammer exploded the cap, the pistol was discharged, and the ball passed into his body. He sank immediately. His first words, as he looked around at the wild and deep woods, were, "What a place for such an accident!" Then calling his son, a boy of twelve, to him and bidding him be obedient to his mother, he commended his departing soul to God and died. It was a terrible scene, as you may well imagine. And yet whose imagination can come up to the reality, for that guide, for that young, fatherless boy, and for that widowed woman, as, later in the day, she sees from the house the guide return without her husband and talking hurriedly to Mr. Henderson's nephew, imagines instantly some mishap! Beyond all control, she hurries to them to hear the terrible news. It



was not long that the system could bear such a shock, and in two years she followed after. The news of Mr. Henderson's death was three days in reaching Jersey City. It came by express on Saturday morning. A paragraph in the Jersey City *Sentinel* of September 6th, then the only newspaper in the city, announced the sad event, and filled the whole city with sorrow. He had lived here more than twenty years. He had been forward in all public improvements. His retiring habits and his kindness of heart were well and widely known. And all felt that a great and public loss, not to be repaired, had been sustained. I need not say that this church mourned. There is on record in the Trustees' book a most worthy tribute to his memory. They gave vent also to their appreciation of his liberality and devotion to this church by the tablet which hangs against yonder wall, and to which, I may say here, even some far away in other lands desired to subscribe, in token of their affection. But nothing could fully express or could compensate their loss—a loss which indeed, I may add after having perused the records of this church through that whole time and subsequently, seems to me one which truly was never wholly repaired.

Mr. Johnstone continued sole pastor until 1848. It had been adjudged best for various reasons, and was so decided December 13, 1847, that he should have an associate. The first plan was to establish a mission preaching-station at Hoboken, which was to be supplied in part by the associate pastor. And a committee, of which Mr. J. D. Miller was chairman, was appointed to select a room at that place. After some correspondence with Princeton, the Rev. Lewis H. Lee, a graduate of that Seminary, was called. He was ordained and installed as associate pastor with Mr. Johnstone by the Presbytery of New York on Wednesday, November 15, 1848. On that occasion Mr. Johnstone presided. The sermon was preached by the Rev. James W. Alexander, D.D., of New York, from 1 Tim. iii. 1. The Rev. John M. Krebs, D.D., of New York, gave the charge

to the pastor, and the Rev. William Snodgrass, D.D., of the same city, the charge to the people. Before Mr. Lee's installation, however, the project of a mission-field at Hoboken was given up.

This associate pastorate continued for about a year. Difficulties in sustaining the church arose, and after several conferences with the Session, Trustees, and others, Mr. Lee, on the 11th of December, 1849, presented his resignation to a meeting of the congregation, who, with regret and a cordial testimony to his zeal and faithfulness, agreed to accept it. And on the 7th of January, 1850, the Presbytery dissolved the relation, thus leaving Mr. Johnstone alone again as pastor. The difficulties of carrying the church forward, however, still continuing, the Session and Trustees called a conference of the leading persons in the church. The result was that Mr. Johnstone, who was now advanced in life, thinking it best on the whole, agreed to resign the active duties of the pastorate, and at length determined to resign the pastorate altogether, on condition of his receiving \$600 per annum during his natural life. This the congregation agreed to at a meeting held May 20, 1850, at which the Rev. John M. Krebs, D.D., of New York, presided; the congregation adding warm expressions of their attachment to Mr. Johnstone and of satisfaction in his zeal and faithfulness. A bond was given, and this sum was paid to him up to the time of his death, which occurred fourteen years afterward. They also assigned a pew for himself and family, in the desire that he would still continue with them as a worshipper. Thus, after a pastorate of six years, the relation was dissolved by the Presbytery of New York, May 27, 1850.

At the same meeting of the congregation which agreed to receive Mr. Johnstone's resignation, on the terms mentioned, the Rev. David King, then just leaving the Theological Seminary at Princeton, was unanimously chosen as pastor, at a salary of \$1,200, and the same commissioners were appointed to represent the congregation in both matters before the Presbytery; namely, Messrs. Luke Lyman,

T. H. Shafer, A. S. Jewell, O. S. Strong, and F. B. Betts. In dissolving the pastoral relations between Mr. Johnstone and the church, the Presbytery appointed Mr. David King to preach in the pulpit on the following Sabbath, June 2, 1850. On Monday, June 3d, the Presbytery of New York again met, the call for Mr. King was tendered to him, and on Wednesday evening, June 12, 1850, Mr. David King was ordained and installed as sole pastor. At this service, the Rev. Dr. William W. Phillips presided, and offered the ordaining prayer; the sermon was preached by the Rev. John D. Wells, of Williamsburg, L. I.; the Rev. J. B. Rockwell, of Brooklyn, gave the charge to the pastor, and the Rev. N. C. Locke the charge to the people.

Everything now seemed to betoken prosperity. Mr. King was a preacher of fine address, and he won all hearts to him. His fine, melodious voice added to the attractions of his preaching. But alas! in God's providence, disappointment again awaited the congregation. Mr. King had been settled hardly four months when a disease of the throat showed itself. The congregation, on October 26th, very kindly gave him an intermission for several months, in hopes that rest would restore him. During this time of intermission the Rev. William W. Eddy preached as stated supply a short time, but long enough to endear himself to the congregation, some of whom still remember him. On leaving this church, he entered upon his noble work as foreign missionary at Sidon, in Syria, where he still labors, with his family in the same service grown up around him, approved of all for his zeal and fidelity.

On January 27, 1851, Mr. King announced to the Session of the church that he was able to resume his duties, and Mr. Eddy's services terminated, the congregation passing a resolution expressing their grateful sense of the value of his ministrations. This short rest did not, however, achieve for Mr. King what had been hoped for. And on March 11, 1851, at a proposal from him to resign his pastorate, the congregation, rather than to have the relation dissolved, agreed

to a further intermission of six months, and undertook to supply the pulpit in the meantime. Mr. King then visited Scotland, his native land.

During this second interval the congregation were supplied stately by the Rev. Wilson Phraner. He also is remembered here with much affection. On leaving the church he became pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of Sing Sing, New York, where he still lives useful and honored.

Before the close of the allowed vacation Mr. King returned and resumed his duties. But it was soon too evident that his malady was not cured, and amidst the deep regrets of the congregation he insisted upon withdrawing. At a meeting of the congregation held October 8, 1851, he offered his resignation. It was sadly accepted, and the relation was dissolved by the Presbytery of New York, October 14, 1851, after a pastorate of about sixteen months.

During the four and a half years of the sole pastorate of the Rev. John Johnstone, the population of the city was increasing greatly. And the church grew in strength and numbers. The congregation was large, and the communion-roll up to the time of the Rev. Lewis H. Lee's accession as associate pastor, numbered 122 names. The joint pastorate of these two ministers also, which lasted about fourteen months, was attended by a regular and gratifying progress. So that when Mr. Lee first, and Mr. Johnstone shortly afterward, had closed their ministry here, there were 166 persons in communion with the church, of which 45 were on confession of their faith.

The ministry of the Rev. David King, although only about 20 months in length, and so much interrupted, was very fruitful in results. The congregation was not only enlarged, but there were added 62 names to the list of the communicants, of which 21 were upon confession of their faith, and the whole number of communicants had risen to 228 at the time of his removal.

These three men are all now gone to their rest. Mr. Johnstone continued to live for a few years later in Jersey

City. In 1853 he returned to reside in Moffatt, Scotland, where he died on the 4th of May, 1864, in the 81st year of his age.

The Rev. Lewis H. Lee was called, immediately upon his leaving this pulpit, to the then young and growing Second Presbyterian Church of Rahway, N. J. He labored there a number of years, resigned, and became pastor of the Presbyterian Church of Waterford, N. Y., where he died in 1862, after a ministry of 14 years.

The Rev. David King, after resting for some time subsequent to his leaving this pulpit, thought himself able to settle, and was called to the pastorate of the Presbyterian Church in Stillwater, N. Y. He had been there only a few months when he was obliged to succumb to the disease which had all along assailed him. He ~~withdrew to Waterford, N. Y., and~~ there died May 15, 1853. A sermon commemorative of his life was preached in this pulpit by the present pastor, on Sunday morning, May 22d, from 2 Cor. iv. 12: "So then death worketh in us, but life in you."

Thus all the pastors of the church, previous to the present one, have passed away. During the short interval which followed Mr. King's release from the pastorate here, the pulpit was supplied statedly for a number of weeks by the Rev. James Vernor Henry, who for many years lived among us with his family, and formed part of our congregation. More than three years ago, he also followed the others to the place of rest.

It may be desirable to note that at this time three steps of some interest were taken. The first of these was, that on September 5, 1851, the original motion was made for the organization of a Second Presbyterian Church here, and notice was ordered to be given from this pulpit of a preaching service to be held in the Mission School room on Sabbath afternoon of September 7th. This movement afterward developed into what now has long been known as the Second Presbyterian Church of this city.

The second incident was, that at this time the prospect



of the growth of the city was such that it was decided to change the relations of the church from the Presbytery of New York and to unite with the Presbytery of Elizabethtown, with a view of ultimately having, what we since have in part, a distinct Presbytery for Hudson County. The resolution to consult the Presbytery of New York was adopted by the congregation at the same meeting which agreed to consent to Mr. King's resignation. The Presbytery, however, having remanded the subject to the congregation for decision, as the only party that could decide such a question, by a vote of the congregation taken at a subsequent meeting it was decided to make no change.

I mention as the third incident, that owing to certain difficulties which had occurred previous to Mr. King's installation, a proposition was made in 1850 to unite with their old friends, the First Reformed Dutch Church. The terms, however, upon which the proposition was to be discussed were not agreed upon, the Presbyterians desiring that the *name* should not come in question. The Reformed Dutch Church, on the other hand, thought that this point *should* be considered. The Reformed Dutch Church therefore declined to act, and the proposition was withdrawn.

Before Mr. King left Jersey City a meeting of the congregation was called and held November 14th, at which he presided, and the name of the Rev. Charles K. Imbrie, of Rahway, was proposed to the people. In consequence of this a subsequent meeting was called to consider the question of calling Mr. Imbrie to the pastorate of this church. This meeting was held December 8, 1851. At this meeting the Rev. Edward E. Rankin, of New York, presided; and then and there your present pastor, who had at that time been pastor for eleven years of the First Presbyterian Church of Rahway, N. J., was called to take the pastoral charge of this congregation. He came and preached in this pulpit for the first time on Sunday, December 14, 1851. After due consideration he decided to accept the call, and was installed as pastor of this church by the Pres-



bytery of New York on Wednesday evening, February 11, 1852. At these services the Rev. Edward E. Rankin presided. Prayer was offered by the Rev. Lewis H. Lee, the former associate pastor. The Rev. Edson Rockwell, of Brooklyn, preached the sermon; the Rev. William Bannard gave the charge to the pastor; the Rev. Frederick Clark, of Astoria, the charge to the people; and prayer was offered by the Rev. Ravaud K. Rodgers, of Bound Brook, N. J., grandson of the Rev. Dr. Rodgers, the first pastor of the Wall Street church, New York. And so began the pastorate which, in God's providence, amid some trials and many conscious defects, and yet attended with many gracious blessings among a kind and affectionate people, has continued nearly twenty-five years.\*

This brings us to the present time. During this interval several changes in the structure of the original building have been effected which may be here mentioned. In 1852 the gallery was changed from the form of slips to the form of square front pews, with a slip in the rear of each, and the iron railing was placed along the front. It was contemplated at that time also to place another row of pews in the front on the ground floor along the breadth of the building. But this was abandoned. Some time later the last two square pews on each side of the church by the door were changed into the present form. In 1856 the church was entirely renovated. The old Wall Street upholstery was removed and the present substituted. The basement lecture-room was enlarged and the back part fitted up and divided into an infant school and a large and commodious study. In 1868, during the pastor's absence in Europe, the old closed pulpit was removed and substituted by the present open-platform structure. In 1871 the basement was again thoroughly refitted by the ladies, the partition between the two back rooms being removed and the present handsome church parlor fitted up.

The building has now† stood in Jersey City thirty-two

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\* A.D. 1876.

† In 1876.

years, or within two years as long as it stood in New York City. And it seems rather singular that the building should thus have twice gone through the same experience of being erected when the population around was large and church-going, then of passing through all the changes incident to an up-town movement of the people, and finally, seeing its locality more and more entrenched upon by the encroachments of business and commerce, until its removal seems but a question of time. So it is in this changing world.

During the existence of this church there have been added to the communion-roll, up to this present year, 1876, close upon 800 persons (796)—*i. e.*, twenty-five persons on an average each year. Of these, 528 have united on certificate, and 268 on profession. This increase has been in general very regular. At two different seasons, however, during the present pastorate, the manifestation of the renewing influences of God's Spirit have been wider than usual and the ingatherings have been larger than during ordinary years. God has blessed us with harmony. In all the varied institutions of the church, the Session, the Diaconate, the Sabbath-school, the ladies' societies, and in the plans adopted for advancing the interests and usefulness of the church, God has preserved us well-nigh entirely from all unpleasant differences, and has bound us together as pastor and people with one heart. We have indeed been called to administer discipline; but the cases calling for it have, by God's goodness, been few; and as to severe discipline, very few. It is a matter for gratitude that the church members as a whole have ever walked with Christian propriety.

It is with pleasure we record that of our communicants four have become ministers of the Gospel, and three have gone to foreign lands, and one to the far West, as missionaries. We have also received to our communion one from the far East, a Chinaman, who, after examination through an interpreter, publicly renounced heathenism and was publicly baptized in the faith of Christ in the presence of the congregation.

I have already spoken of the first elders, Messrs. Strong, Stowell, and Hardenburgh. Since then there have been installed as elders,—June 30, 1850, Thomas H. Shafer and Justus Slater; January 26, 1851, Ellis F. Ayers and James S. Davenport; May 6, 1855, William R. Janeway and William H. Talcott; December 14, 1863, Bennington F. Randolph and Edwin Wygant; December 8, 1867, Horace S. Allen, Nathaniel C. Jaquith, Titus B. Meigs, David M. Stiger, Thomas H. Shafer, A. S. Jewell, and John Rodgers. All these having been previously duly elected, were ordained and installed, or simply installed at the times above named, with the exception of Messrs. A. S. Jewell and John Rodgers, who declined to serve. Mr. Shafer was reinstalled December 8, 1867, he having been absent in another city for a time and having returned.

In the early years of the church the Elders served also as Deacons until the year 1850, when Mr. Abraham Hoagland and Mr. Ellis F. Ayers were elected deacons. Mr. Ayers declined to serve and Mr. Hoagland was ordained alone June 30, 1850. Since that time there have been elected and ordained to this office,—January 26, 1851, Joseph Bunnell and Edwin Wygant; May 6, 1855, N. C. Jaquith and Erwin Crane; December 8, 1867, Henry W. Buxton, James R. Henry, Charles Jaquith, and Joseph F. Randolph, Jr. Of all the Ruling Elders, Messrs. B. F. Randolph, D. M. Stiger, and T. B. Meigs alone remain with us. Messrs. H. S. Allen and James S. Davenport have removed from the city, but have not withdrawn their membership. Of the Deacons, Messrs. James R. Henry, Joseph F. Randolph, Jr., and Henry W. Buxton only are still among us.\* These officers

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\* In 1876. Since this date the following were elected Elders, December 7, 1879, viz.: Messrs. Henry W. Buxton, Flavel McGee, Matthias Smith, and William Ewan. Mr. Smith declined to serve; the others were ordained January 4, 1880. At the same time (December 7th) Mr. John B. Huntting was elected deacon. He declined serving, and was therefore not ordained. He has nevertheless ever since rendered most efficient service to the congregation in every duty which the office could require.

have all proved faithful men. And it is an exceedingly great comfort to your pastor, as I am sure it is to the members of this church, to call to recollection the many years of service during which they have gone in and out among us, steadily performing their official duties to this church and honoring the Lord by their Christian deportment. No discord has ever marred our delightful intercourse with one another. Some of them have passed away in blessed hope to their reward; others have left this field to be diligently employed in other spheres of Christian service. A few, as I have said, still remain, to be, under the Lord's hand, our helps and guides to the congregation as we pass through the wilderness to the land of rest,—wise counsellors, kind friends, Christian brethren, all. Doubtless, when the chief Shepherd shall appear, they "shall receive the crown of glory which fadeth not away."

The early Trustees, chosen in 1844, I have also mentioned: Gregory, Henderson, Strong, Hardenburgh, Southmayd, Randall, Alexander. These are names still well remembered in this congregation. Since that time many others have been elected to manage our temporal affairs whose names will be found on a subsequent page.\* To the labors and discretion, and, in a number of cases, to the untiring energy and large liberality of these men this church owes much, under God, for its continuance, for its prosperity, sometimes under critical circumstances, and for the successful prosecution of our work. If the spirit which has pervaded their body be any proper criterion, we must believe that what they have done has been done with a desire to promote the honor and success of Christ's Church. And although they derive their authority from the State only, as the incorporated representatives of the congregation in civil affairs, yet the service which they have rendered and the zeal which they have manifested without any hope of per-

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\* See list of the Trustees of the church during the successive years of its history on pages 121-125.

sonal reward and oftentimes at much sacrifice is not forgotten of Him whose servants all faithful officers in any department of His cause, truly are. May His reward be given to them and theirs in that day. The present Board is composed of the following members, viz.: Flavel McGee, Benj. G. Clarke, H. A. Coursen, Wm. E. Stiger, T. B. Meigs, J. A. Kunkel, and A. S. Jewell.

It has always been the aim of the pastor to bring this church to recognize its obligations to aid in the preaching of the Gospel through all the earth and to be alive to the appeals arising from the wants and sorrows of men, temporal and especially spiritual, everywhere; in a word, that this church should fulfil the Lord's command to "preach the Gospel to every creature," and the Apostle's injunction, "to do good to all men as we have opportunity, and especially to them of the household of faith." And for this reason he has invoked the prayers and the gifts of this people in behalf of these objects. I have spoken of the sending forth from our number representatives to the Home and Foreign fields. Besides this the gifts of this congregation have been yearly bestowed in generous measure to all the Boards of the Church, and to many other affiliated schemes for fulfilling Christ's work on earth. I had thought of presenting to you in full the amounts bestowed for these objects by this church and which I have enumerated to you year by year. But let this pass. I am sure that in the very highest and most self-sacrificing contributions, we have done little compared with the great mercies received by us from Him who gave His very self for us. Let me then only say that these gifts have increased yearly and that the donations made by this church to help others have quite equalled or even exceeded what has been done for the maintenance of the truth among ourselves.

For assistance in this beneficent work of the church, we have been much indebted to two institutions whose work has been conducted by the ladies of the congregation.

The oldest of these is the Ladies' Mite Society. It would



be hard to set forth specifically the large amount of work done by the faithful women who have labored in this department. It has not only given generous and wise aid in meeting many specific wants for the comfort of the congregation, but besides this it has given large aid in meeting the need for clothing by our missionaries in the West.

The other association of the ladies is of more recent growth. It was founded indeed since the union of the Old and New School branches of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America. It was organized at first, and soon after the union, as the "Zenana Society"; and more recently, in November, 1872, as our "Woman's Foreign Missionary Society." Year after year it has labored on steadily in this cause and has raised hundreds of dollars annually to assist in establishing the Gospel in Japan and other places. It has been cheered in this work by the ready aid of the youthful members composing "The Chrysanthemum Band."

Our Sabbath-school has occupied so important a place that the history of the church would not be complete without a somewhat detailed statement respecting it. This has been carefully prepared by our esteemed deacon, Mr. James R. Henry, who has for many years been connected with our Sabbath-school and who long occupied the position of its secretary. The statement will be found on a subsequent page.

I must not forget to state that for many years this church has been entirely free from any debt, each year's accounts being fully met as the year passed. At the beginning of its history indeed it was necessarily thus incumbered by reason of the large cost of the building. Notwithstanding the liberal donations made at the outset toward the building fund, there still remained a considerable amount of indebtedness when the building was finished. This consisted mainly of a balance owed to Mr. Dudley S. Gregory and to the estate of David Henderson, deceased, who had liberally advanced the money for the completion of the church building. This



balance amounted to \$12,000. Besides this, there was due also to these gentlemen, for other bills paid, the sum of \$3,169, making a total of \$15,169. To the architect, Mr. Andrew Clerk, also there was a considerable sum due. He, however, very generously offered to remit all other claims against the church upon receipt of a bond at 6 per cent. for \$350. There was further due to Mr. Gregory for the organ, beyond what the ladies had raised, the sum of \$1,625, making a total indebtedness by the church at the start of \$17,145.

In addition to the above, when the Rev. John Johnstone resigned his pastoral office here, the Trustees, as already stated, had given him a bond for the payment of \$600 annually during his lifetime, as a token of respect and an acknowledgment of the value of his services by the congregation.

It may be readily understood that all this was a considerable burden to the young church in its early history. For relief from this indebtedness the church was under obligation, first of all, to these gentlemen themselves, who held the bonds. Mr. Andrew Clerk, having at the first released the congregation, as just stated, from all obligations to him whatever, beyond the bond for \$350 at interest, some years after, very generously released them entirely by returning the bond itself, and received from the Trustees a special vote of thanks for this new token of his kindness. The Hon. Dudley S. Gregory also, and the heirs of David Henderson, Esq., after remitting, in 1855, the interest which had accrued upon their bonds for the preceding five years, agreed to demand no interest on the bonds for the future, if the Trustees would engage to pay regularly the annual interest due to the Rev. Mr. Johnstone. This the Trustees agreed to do, with a vote of cordial thanks to those gentlemen for this arrangement, as being substantially a yearly gift of that amount to the church. This sum of \$600 per annum was regularly paid to Mr. Johnstone up to the time of his death in Scotland, May, 1864, and afterward continued to the surviving member of his family for the rest of the current year. An ad-

ditional act of kindness was done by Mr. Gregory and the heirs of Mr. Henderson, in subsequently agreeing to cancel all further obligation of the church to them, in consideration of two bonds of \$5,000 each, given them by the church, with interest at 6 per cent. Mr. Gregory further agreed to remit all accrued interest on the balance still due him for the organ, and to receive, as payment in full, the part of the principal, \$864, yet unpaid. These generous proposals were also accepted by the Trustees with special thanks. This continued until 1864, when Mr. Johnstone died. Meantime a number of the members of the congregation had been very liberal in their donations, so that notwithstanding the above obligations, the current expenses were paid, the church was once and again refitted and repaired at considerable outlay, the salary of the pastor from time to time generously increased, and also the standing debt in a measure reduced. But in November of 1863, on a motion in the Board of Trustees by Mr. F. B. Betts, it was decided to make an effort to remove the church from all remaining indebtedness. To carry out this resolve, Messrs. Benjamin G. Clarke, Hampton A. Coursen, and James R. Thompson, hearty and liberal supporters of the church, were appointed a committee. Their efforts were completely successful. By their own personal liberality and the generous contributions of other members of the congregation at their solicitation, they reported in April, 1864, just previous to Mr. Johnstone's decease, that funds had been collected to pay off the entire standing and floating debts of the congregation, and to leave some balance for future use. This was a great satisfaction to the congregation, and called forth a vote of hearty thanks to these gentlemen for their assiduity. From that time to the present hour the church has been entirely free from debt, any remaining deficiency at the close of the year being met by special gifts at the time.

[Note added, October 10, 1888:

The next effort was to remove, if possible, the ground-rent of \$60 per annum, which had been paid from the early his-

tory of the church. This effort was made about the year 1872. The direction of this matter was committed by the Trustees to Flavel McGee, Esq., one of their number. By his faithful and wise efforts arrangements were made with the parties then living in New Haven, Conn., who held the ground-rent of the lots. The money was paid, and a conveyance of the quit-rents was made by Theodore B. Woolsey and his wife to Benjamin G. Clarke, Esq., dated May 5, 1873, at New Haven, Conn. Mr. Clarke, a member of the congregation and Board of Trustees, held the same until the releases spoken of below were effected, and then made a conveyance of the quit-rents to the church under date of November 5, 1880. And the property, from that time, came into the unincumbered possession of the congregation.

The last effort as to the property was to obtain release from certain conditions imposed in the original deeds given to the church, and which stood in the way of the sale of the property at any time, or the removal of the church elsewhere, or the cessation of public worship there. It was, I believe, at the suggestion of the Hon. Bennington F. Randolph, and with the expressed wish of the Hon. D. S. Gregory, not long before his decease, who saw, from the changes taking place in the population of the city, that it would be desirable for the congregation to remove at some time, that the effort was undertaken. Mr. Gregory himself, and also Mr. David Henderson, were the grantors who had caused the insertion of these conditions in the original deeds. Mr. Gregory conveyed a release to the congregation from the restrictions June 7, 1871; and he advised that application should be made to all the heirs of the estate of David Henderson, deceased, to grant a like release. Mr. Flavel McGee undertook and effected this service. Application was made to all these heirs in this country and abroad for their individual release. It was in every case granted, the last release being made April 16, 1880. From this time the whole property became the unconditioned possession of the congregation to sell or to remove it, as they might deem proper.]

I have already stated why this church was organized by the Presbytery of New York instead of one on this side of the river. It continued in this connection until the year 1870, when the union between the Old and New School branches of the Presbyterian Church having been effected after thirty-three years of separation, the new Presbytery of Jersey City, covering the three counties of Hudson, Bergen, and Passaic, in New Jersey, was formed and this church was thus transferred, from the Presbytery of New York and the Synod of New York, to the Presbytery of Jersey City, within the bounds of the Synod of New Jersey.

As we look back to the year 1844, when this church was organized, what great changes do we discover in both our city itself and the number of churches erected for worship in it. From being a territory, bounded by the river on one side and Mill Creek on the other, and extending in the north and south direction from Hoboken to the Morris Canal, the city now reaches as far as Greenville and takes in Hudson City. And instead of a population of 4,500, it has now 82,000.\* And as to the churches, we have seen, during that time, the one Presbyterian organization grow until we number six congregations, besides two of the United Presbyterian body, or eight in all. The Reformed churches have increased from two to nine. The one Baptist church has enlarged to six and the single Episcopal church has grown to nine. The Methodists, in the early years of the city, had one organization on York Street, and a previous one (called, I am told, "The Ranters") occupying a building in Grand Street, near to Greene. The Methodists have grown from such feeble beginnings until they now number fourteen churches. The Congregationalists and Lutherans, at that time both unrepresented, have since then each become two organizations. In short, instead of the four churches occupying then the ground, together with the Reformed church in Wayne Street, Jersey City now num-

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\* In 1876. In 1888 the population is 153,513.

bers (1876) fifty Protestant churches, besides the eight of the Catholic Church, which has greatly increased during the same time.

On the other hand, among these changes we cannot fail to note the rapid alterations which have taken place in the surroundings of this building and the changes in the persons who attend these services. As already intimated, instead of our being surrounded by a dense and church-going population, as was once the case, this population has for a number of years been flowing to more remote parts of the city and to other places of habitation. Even indeed before this drift of population away from us became so general, the changes in the audience have been very great, by reason of the places of the many who left being occupied by others. This has been so much the case that our audience-room has been occupied and vacated by three almost entirely different audiences in the thirty-two years during which the building has stood. As I look around to-day I can discern only eleven families of those who greeted me about twenty-five years ago, when I first stood in this pulpit. And of the 233 communicants then on the roll, only nine are yet with us. All the rest are either deceased or gone to other places of residence. Thus we have had our trials while we have had our great mercies—a changing church while yet a prosperous one, and a united people. In the midst of all these changes the congregation has kept onward, endeavoring to do its work for the Lord in its place. Suggestions have been put forward, indeed, at times, looking to the possibility of our removing to some remoter and more promising locality for future continued work. But it has been judged that our work in this spot is not yet finished and no serious motion has been made for a removal.

And now, as we look back in review, surely we can say with David, “Goodness and mercy have followed us continually.” During the thirty-two years gone by since the day of our organization, a whole generation has passed away from the earth. With the poor heathen, alas! their tem-



ples and superstitious worship are all that they possess in their religions. For these have no spiritual power or any efficacy to impart or to continue life to the soul of the worshipper. They leave no blessing behind. Though their temples may have stood for centuries, they have conveyed no spiritual benediction from one generation to another. How different is it with the passing years of a standing Christian church! Each year leaves its impress behind it for good. And as you and I look down to-day and see before us these once young children now grown up here to take the place of their fathers, and remember the sweet greetings with which we have, under this same roof, welcomed so many of them to the Lord's table, and afterward seen them bring their offspring in turn and devote them to the Lord God, whom we together, during these years, have been worshipping and still worship, we feel deeply how blessed and abiding are the holy influences of every standing sanctuary of God. Let us live, then, in the future, to appreciate more heartily the value of God's house while our day lasts. Let us be in earnest in its work and wait habitually within the doors of its courts. And while we, of course, look most desiringly "to be clothed upon," each of us, "with our house which is from heaven," and long therefore most for our Lord's appearing and kingdom, let us not forget that it is by our faithfulness and service for our Lord while we are here in this present world, that the degree of our joy and blessedness will be measured in the day when He comes "to give to every man according as his work has been."



## PREFACE TO SERMON V.

AS was stated in the closing sermon of the preceding series, preached in the year 1876, it had been even at that time increasingly evident, for some years, to all interested in the First Presbyterian Church of Jersey City that, owing to the constant removal of families from the part of the city where the church stood, and the growing pressure of business interests in the same section, the congregation sooner or later must remove from that locality. Without any formal resolution, however, it was tacitly agreed that they were not yet ready to resign the situation. And in reply to the question as to any change in the pastorate, it was considered best to continue as heretofore as long as possible. For this purpose, therefore, the annual expenses of the congregation were cheerfully met by those still remaining, the ordinances regularly continued, and the work of beneficence in the church carefully prosecuted. This continued until the year 1888. At the opening of the spring in this year it was found that not only had the removal of families much increased, but also that the building itself was in need of large repairs at a heavy expense, if it was still to be occupied. This brought the matter to a crisis. Upon a suggestion of the pastor it became a question whether some new step was not now advisable. Meetings were held, first of the Trustees, and afterward of the Trustees and the Session together with the pastor, wherein the whole situation was freely discussed. It was then agreed by all that the time had arrived when the question should be fairly proposed to the congregation, whether services in that building should not now cease. In order to give the congregation the opportunity to act entirely untrammelled in the case, the pastor gave notice that he would now do as

he had always intended doing when this crisis should arise, and request from the Presbytery a dissolution of the pastoral relations. This was at first opposed as inexpedient by the meeting then assembled, and afterward by the congregation. But upon the statement of the pastor the congregation at length acquiesced under the circumstances. After due notice from the pulpit the congregation met in the church building March 28, 1888, and subsequently on two other occasions. The question being plainly stated to them, it was at length unanimously agreed by all present that services in the building should cease at the end of the month of April, and that the closing exercises should be held on Sabbath morning, April 29, 1888. On April 17, 1888, the Presbytery of Jersey City met at Passaic, and at the request of the pastor, the congregation acquiescing, the pastoral relation was dissolved, to take effect on April 29th; and the pastor, after being appointed Moderator of the Session, was directed to preach the closing sermon and to declare the pulpit vacant.

Under this appointment the discourse which follows was delivered by the pastor in the church on Sabbath morning, April 29, 1888. There was a very large audience, which included very many who had been formerly communicants in this church, or had regularly attended its services. As may be easily understood, it was a solemn and impressive scene. The pastor conducted the services throughout. After a voluntary by the choir and the prayer of invocation, the congregation joined in singing the following hymn:

“ O God, our help in ages past,  
Our hope for years to come,  
Our shelter from the stormy blast,  
And our eternal home !

“ Before the hills in order stood,  
Or earth received her frame,  
From everlasting Thou art God,  
To endless years the same.

“Thy word commands our flesh to dust :  
‘Return, ye sons of men’;  
All nations rose from earth at first,  
And turn to earth again.

“Time, like an ever-rolling stream,  
Bears all its sons away ;  
They fly, forgotten, as a dream  
Dies at the opening day.

“O God, our help in ages past,  
Our hope for years to come,  
Be Thou our guard while troubles last,  
And our eternal home !”

The singing, throughout the service, in choir and congregation, was most impressive. All were furnished with books, and all appeared to join in swelling the volume of praise that was offered. The passage of Scripture then read was taken from the First Epistle of Peter, iv. 7-19, with chapter v. 1-11. The following hymn was then sung :

“Saviour ! I follow on  
Guided by Thee,  
Seeing not yet the hand  
That leadeth me ;  
Hushed be my heart and still,  
Fear I no further ill,  
Only to meet Thy will  
My will shall be.

“Riven the rock for me  
Thirst to relieve,  
Manna from heaven falls  
Fresh every eve ;  
Never a want severe  
Caused my eye a tear,  
But Thou dost whisper near,  
‘Only believe !’

“Often to Marah’s brink  
Have I been brought ;

Shrinking the cup to drink,  
Help I have sought ;  
And with the prayer's ascent,  
Jesus the branch hath rent,  
Quickly relief hath sent,  
Sweetening the draught.

“Saviour! I long to walk  
Closer with Thee;  
Led by Thy guiding hand,  
Ever to be;  
Constantly near Thy side,  
Quickened and purified,  
Living for Him who died  
Freely for me!”

The sermon which follows was then delivered.

## SERMON V.

"Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand, therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God: praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints; and for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the Gospel, for which I am an ambassador in bonds: that therein I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak. But that ye also may know my affairs, and how I do, Tychicus, a beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord, shall make known to you all things: whom I have sent unto you for the same purpose, that ye might know our affairs, and that he might comfort your hearts. Peace be to the brethren, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen."

—EPHESIANS VI. 10-24.

So the apostle Paul closes his epistle to that noble church of Ephesus. It was a church which had been founded mainly by his own labors. He had seen there strange occurrences—like that wild mob which had gathered in the theatre crying out against Paul and the Gospel of Christ because by the influence of these their idolatrous trade was undermining. "A great and effectual door was there opened to him, but there were many adversaries" (1 Cor. xvi. 9). He had met with unscrupulous men there with whom he had to contend, and at whom he may possibly have glanced, when he says, "I have fought with wild beasts at Ephesus." But, on the other hand, he had met with great successes; as you see shining out, for example, in that blazing fire, which burns up in the streets of Ephesus those books of magic of great value, kindled by converts to the truth. It was a church of

high spiritual gifts, as the tenor of this very Epistle testifies; and of great graces, too, as you see by our Lord's own commendation of the church in the book of Revelation.

The apostle had long before (for this Epistle was most probably written from Rome) met with the Elders of that church at Miletus (as you find in the 20th chapter of the Acts of the Apostles), and, in taking farewell of them, had given vent to that earnest and devout review and appeal to them which is there recorded. The words of our text seem almost an echo of that same fervent appeal. How he even then remembered his long and arduous labors among them! How well he knew their great gifts! But he sees also their dangers. He foresaw they would be assailed, through the craft of men, even from among themselves, who would depart from the faith. And so in one breath he warns them, he exhorts them, and he consoles them. And then he kneels down and prays with them, commending them and their future to God. In the midst of all his fears and hopes, he sees two great sources of protection and guidance and comfort to them—God and His word of grace: "I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you inheritance among them that are sanctified." He points them to *these* as their strongholds, and then he warns them to be faithful.

So you see here, also, in the closing words of this letter, how he takes his farewell of them,—this letter, written most probably long, long afterward; written in Rome's prison-house, and when Paul was an "ambassador of Christ in chains" (vi. 20). You see here how his heart is full of the same thoughts. He warns them earnestly of their foes and their dangers and their helps. He warns them that in this present world there is conflict to the end; and that, too, not with merely human enemies, such as might and would indeed bind or slay or otherwise trouble them; but that behind all these and other hindrances, there is a domain of wicked and mighty spirits—"spiritual wickedness in high places"—who in all ways are seeking to devour God's flock.



And then, as if still echoing his words at Miletus, he points them to their Helpers. First, and highest of all, Jesus, the Lord himself; "Be strong in the Lord and in the power of *His* might." "He is with you and is mightier than all that are against you." And then, secondly, His everlasting Word—"the sword of the Spirit," which is the *word of God*. This word of truth—believed in, obeyed, followed; this it is, that, received in faith, clothes God's children from head to foot in the whole armor of God, and they become able to stand in the evil day. Take to you the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. Be girded about the loins, and thus braced for the contest by His everlasting truth. Take for a breastplate that spotless righteousness which that Word alone reveals, and which is of God alone, and in which not one jot of human merit appears; as a firm casing for the feet, so that they may stand steady without slipping in the hour of sore battle, take the firm belief in that Word's good news of perfect peace from God reconciled to the soul by the blood of the cross and freely given of God to the sinner in Christ Jesus; as a shield to beat off all the fiery darts of the enemy, take that firm faith in the mighty Lord of grace and glory, who is proclaimed in the Word as with us and for us; and as a helmet to protect the head from every blow of the enemy, take that perfected salvation,—which needs no human addition, which meets every spiritual necessity of the soul, provides for every defect, assures a perfect triumph to the believer, glorifies God, exalts both His justice and His mercy together, exhibits all His infinite attributes in harmony, and bestows on the redeemed soul a glory that is unspeakable and forever. So he bids them stand strong in the Lord Christ and strong in His word—to stand day by day in communion with their eternal Lord in "all prayer and supplication." This ensures peace, progress, protection, and victory.

And then, just as if they heard again the affectionate tones uttered at Miletus, and which open his very heart to them, you see how he reckons upon their continued sym-

pathy for him and his work for Christ, although they are to see him no more: "Pray for me also, that utterance may be given unto me that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the Gospel, for which I am an ambassador in bonds, that therein I may speak boldly as I ought to speak." See how he recognizes the bond of union between them, though far separated from each other—he in Rome's prison-house, they in Ephesus,—sure of their abiding interest in all that affects him, as he is full of interest in all that affects them whom he has so long known in the Gospel: "That ye also may know my affairs, and how I do, Tychicus, a beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord, shall make known to you all things: whom I have sent unto you for the same purpose, that ye might know our affairs, and that he might comfort your hearts." And then, at last, just as he had knelt down on the sandy beach, among those affectionate, weeping souls at Miletus, and prayed for them, so he prays for them *now*, commending them and theirs to God. "Peace be to the brethren, and love with faith from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ": Until his yearning heart reaches out, in its unbounded love to the whole company there and everywhere of those who love the Lord Jesus; and his expanding soul prays for them all: "Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen."

It is with this same tender remembrance of his congregation in the Lord, and of his protracted labors among them, that any long-settled pastor must part from the people fed by him in the name of the Chief Shepherd, the Lord Christ. He *will* rejoice over the fruits among them in the converts brought to Christ, and in the souls nourished by the word of God; "his hope, his joy, his crown of glorying in the day of the Lord Jesus." He *will* give thanks for all the graces exhibited by them, "knowing no greater joy than to see his children walking in the truth." He *will* look forward to the blessedness of the meeting in that day when all that believe shall be gathered into the Lord's presence. He

*will* fervently and believingly plead in their behalf with God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, that the abiding peace and faith and love which are from God may rest in their souls and in his own, as the common heritage and bond which binds them and him first to God and His Christ, and then to each other; that holy bond which is never broken by any distance or any earthly changes however sudden or sad. And he *will*, as a closing word of exhortation (for he cannot help doing it, nor fail to teach *them* to do it), look out with smiles of joyful recognition, beyond their own circle, to the great company where are seen "all who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity," and who, in their different assemblies, and lands and nations, are walking together, as one people separated from the world, toward the same heavenly rest—toward the bridal-day of the Lord Christ (Rev. xix. 7).

Yet, at the same time, he will not be insensible to the dangers which lurk by the way for his flock in this present evil world; nor will he fail to stir them up, in his parting words to "hold fast the beginning of their confidence in Christ firm unto the end," "to keep firmly that which they have received, that none whatever—the world, the flesh, or the devil—none in earth or hell—that *none* take their crown."

And as his consolation in the view of their perils, what can he do but point them—as the apostle does his Christian flock at Ephesus—to their great strongholds: the arm of the Lord Jesus as their strength, and the Lord's ever-living word as their abiding light. Yes! my people, to the LORD CHRIST will he point them; for He is able and He alone is "able to keep us from falling, yea, and to present every one of us, at length, before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy." Blessed! blessed! thrice blessed are they whom HE keeps. Blessed! blessed! thrice blessed are they: for He that has begun a good work in them will preserve it, and crown it in the day of His glory. So may He sanctify *you* "wholly in body, soul, and spirit, and preserve *you* blameless unto the day of His coming."

And to His word of truth, too, will he point them—so able, as it is, to save the soul; through the power of the Holy Ghost:

1st. Because it so clearly reveals, in all His beauty and glory and grace, the Lord himself, “whom to know is life eternal”; whom to look at in the word, as in a glass, is to have one’s own face and whole person changed into the same “image from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of our God.”

2d. Next, because that Word portrays so completely our own poor selves; so weak, so helpless, so sinful, so justly condemned, so easily carried away by temptation; in a word, so destitute in *ourselves* of all that is good before God; and yet, when in *Him*, delivered, accepted, renewed—the habitation of God’s Spirit—strong to live for Him who died for us, able “to do all things through the indwelling Christ who strengthens us.” That Word of God which flatters no one—that searching Word of God which abases every man’s pride. It never beguiles us. It exalts the Lord alone, and gives glory to *Him*, and brings glory to *us* only through Him and our union to Him by faith.

3d. Next, because that Word is itself divine; “the word of the living God, which endureth forever.” Its promises are divine. The way from sin and hell to glory, which it alone, of the religions in the world, reveals, is divine. Its assurances are God’s assurances. Its warnings and its hopes are of God. The weapons which it supplies are from God’s own armory; swords that never break—simple slings, that will smite to the dust even the proud, mighty giants of defying error and corruption—shields that cannot be pierced. And when we receive it truly, we receive it, as the apostle says, “not as the word of man, but as it is in truth, the word of the living God, which effectually worketh in you that believe” (1 Thess. ii. 13).

4th. And lastly, because that Word is therefore invested with the power of God. The Lord, the Holy Ghost, speaks in it and through it. His power animates the word of His grace, hence it is called the life-giving word. It has power

to slay. As Luther says: "The Gospel which the Lord has put into the mouth of His apostles is His sword wherewith He smites as with thunder and lightning." And so it has power to revive to a new life. It has power to pierce to the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart; and so it has power to build up unto life eternal, for it holds up a crucified Christ which is "the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth, to the Jew first and also to the Greek" (Rom. i. 16).

These two, the mighty Lord Christ and His eternal Word of truth! They stand like the two pillars before the temple of Solomon—Jachin, "he will establish"; Boaz, "in strength." They stand as the instruction, the joy, the help, the eternal hope of all who, with opened spiritual eyes, enter the church of the living God. Bind these two, oh! my beloved people, to your hearts as your strong, unfailing defence, as with hooks of steel—God and His word of grace.

Thirty-six years ago last December 14th, I stood for the first time in this pulpit, after receiving the call of this people to be their pastor. At your call I left the First Presbyterian Church of Rahway, New Jersey, where for eleven years I had served as pastor to a most affectionate and beloved people, and was installed over you as pastor by the Presbytery of New York, thirty-six years ago, on the 11th of last February. In that service the Rev. Edward E. Rankin presided; prayer was offered by the Rev. Lewis H. Lee, formerly associate pastor with Rev. Mr. Johnstone, and by Rev. Ravaud K. Rodgers, of Bound Brook; the charge to the pastor was given by the Rev. Wm. Bannard, of New York, and the charge to the people by the Rev. Frederick G. Clark, of Astoria, N. Y. All these, with the exception of Dr. Bannard and Dr. Rankin, are now gone home, most of them long since gone home. How vividly that scene is before me now. I undertook this charge, I must confess, with some hesitancy, and for a few years these doubts continued for reasons upon which I need not now dwell. But upon reflec-



tion I decided to remain at all events for five years. When that time had elapsed, all was clear, and instead of staying five years, I am, after thirty-six years, still here to-day. Yes, I am still here to-day, having thought it best, after much consideration, as they severally occurred, to decline three different offers for my removal elsewhere, among which were two calls to churches in other cities, urged upon me with much importunity. I mention all this to show how greatly I esteemed the people of this charge.

I have so fully, on another occasion, entered into the history of this church, that I will say but little of it now. A very few facts must suffice. This building stood in Wall Street, New York, for thirty-three years; to see, in that time, a change from being in a locality with a large surrounding population, to a place filled up with the appliances of business. It has now stood forty-three years in Jersey City, and has witnessed the same change over again. When I came among you the population of Jersey City was considerably under thirteen thousand, and the population was almost all within this vicinity and that of Ahasimus. Grand Street was still unpaved, and was even in hillocks on the sidewalk. Very few houses were beyond the east side of Warren Street until you came to Grove Street. Besides this church there was St. Matthew's Episcopal Church, with its first rector, Rev. Dr. Barry, still living, though very near his decease, which occurred within a few weeks. The Rev. Jas. Bowden was the rector in charge. There was also the First Reformed (Dutch) Church in Grand Street with its former pastor, the Rev. Matthias Lusk, then recently dismissed. It was still mourning the sudden decease of his successor, the Rev. Jno. A. Yates, D.D., who had been called but not yet installed, and who had been followed by the short pastorate of the Rev. David Lord. And the pulpit was then vacant, the Rev. Alexander W. McClure entering on his pastorate a few weeks later. The Rev. P. D. Van Cleef had been pastor for two years in the Second Reformed Church in Wayne Street, in a building which was burned that winter, and replaced by



the present structure. The First Baptist Church (or Union Baptist Church) was in Grove Street, with the Rev. William Verrinder (afterward, for so many years, our admirable city missionary), as its pastor. Trinity Methodist Church was in York Street, and St. Paul's M. E. Church in Third Street had just begun its history, and the building was standing almost alone, with the ground about it still unlevelled. The Roman Catholics occupied, as their church, the building opposite the First Reformed Church, now known as St. Aloysius' Academy. The Second Presbyterian and the Park Reformed Churches were in their earliest incipency, and were organized some time afterward. On the Heights (then Bergen), the old Reformed Dutch Church, with its pastor, Rev. Benjamin C. Taylor, D.D., and its new stone building recently completed, stood alone. All the churches, of every name, which have appeared in that region, have come into existence long since. Lafayette was then, and for years afterward, a salt meadow. Of the settled pastors at that time, none but the Rev. P. D. Van Cleef, D.D., and the Rev. William Verrinder, now survive.

This church had enjoyed the services of three pastors—the Rev. John Johnstone, and the Rev. Lewis H. Lee as associate pastor, and after these the Rev. David King. These are all long since gone to rest. And so, too, is the Rev. James Vernon Henry (father of our Deacon Jas. R. Henry), who ministered at times to this people as stated supply. And so, too (I may here add), are many of those who were especially active in securing the organization of this church, and the removal of this building from its old site in New York to its present position. In particular, I must not fail to mention three of these—the late David Henderson, whose tablet is on the wall, and who died, as you know, by accident very soon after this building was dedicated in 1845, and Dudley S. Gregory, who was removed by death more than ten years ago. It was chiefly by the energy and liberality of these two gentlemen that the purchase and transfer of this building was effected.

The third was the late Andrew Clerk, Esq., the skilful and liberal architect, to whose supervision the transportation and erection of the building was entrusted, and who left us, as you remember, after long residence here, a little more than a year ago, to enter that heavenly mansion not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. Besides the departed ministers of Christ already named, this church had been served by the Rev. Wilson Phraner, long afterward pastor in Sing Sing, N. Y., and now honorably retired from the pastorate, and the Rev. William W. Eddy, since then missionary in Syria. These were at that time young men just closing their studies at the Theological Seminary, and preached here for a time as stated supplies. These both still live.

Of the Ruling Elders, among those who were chosen at the church organization, Luther T. Stowell, L. D. Hardenburgh, and Ellis F. Ayers, the last of whom had also been elected Deacon, had all removed. The four Elders whom I found here, Oliver S. Strong (elected at the organization), Justus Slater, Thomas H. Shafer, and James S. Davenport, are all gone to their reward. And so also are Wm. R. Janeway, Wm. H. Talcott, H. S. Allen, and Nathaniel C. Jaquith, who followed them. Elders Edwin Wygant, Titus B. Meigs, D. M. Stiger, Henry W. Buxton, and Wm. Ewan, still live,\* but have removed to other places. Bennington F. Randolph and Flavel McGee alone yet remain with us. The first elected deacon, Ellis F. Ayers, had gone from the city, and two others associated with him, Joseph Bonnell and Ab. Hoagland, soon followed him. The only remaining deacon whom I found here was Edwin Wygant. Following him were Nathaniel C. Jaquith, Erwin R. Crane, Henry W. Buxton, Jas. R. Henry, Chas. H. Jaquith, and Joseph F. Randolph, Jr., several of whom afterward became Elders. These all, with the exception of N. C. Jaquith, still live, but have all

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\* Mr. Wygant deceased a few months later—an Elder at the time in Spring Street Presbyterian Church, New York.

removed to other cities, except James R. Henry, who, as our Deacon, still remains with us.

Time will not allow me to mention even by name the long array of Trustees,\* who, before and during these thirty-six years and down to the present time, have administered the temporal affairs of this church so wisely and efficiently, and by whose energy the finances have been kept in a sound condition; by whose wise zeal on several occasions, particularly during the last twenty-five years, the heavy debt, which encumbered the church when I came here, was entirely removed; the liability to a ground-rent, which had long continued, was cancelled; the reversionary clauses of the original deed withdrawn by the liberality of the heirs of Messrs. Henderson and Gregory, and the whole church property brought entirely into the possession of the congregation; and lastly (though not least), by whose fidelity and perseverance, during the last six or eight years of pressure, the liabilities of the church have always been promptly met, and the congregation continued from year to year entirely free from all debt. They who build the house of God, and they who keep and cleanse the sanctuary, are not forgotten of the Lord any more than they who minister within at its holy services.

Nor can I stop either to set before you the well-remembered and beloved faces of the many Sabbath-school superintendents, and teachers and officers too, who have trained in Christian truth the children of the congregation, and these children's children after them, down to the present faithful band of helpers who still so successfully prosecute the work.† Nor can I speak by name of the noble women, who, in the Mite Society and in the Missionary Society, have for so many years steadily and most efficiently done their part in enabling this church of Christ fully to perform its work. And as I look at that place of the choir yonder,

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\* See the list of names at the end of this volume.

† See history of the Sabbath-school, by James R. Henry, at the close of this volume.

how many familiar faces of young men and of young women, and more lately of children too, whose sweet voices in harmony have led our devotions or who have skilfully handled the organ in God's praises, come up before me!—many of them still living, but some gone where the music far excels all the music of earth.

In my pastorate here it has been my endeavor, as a main object, to lead you, my people, to an accurate knowledge of the Word of God. It is for this reason that I have gone over connectedly, after the good old plan, so many of the books of the Bible in courses of lecturing, both on the Sabbath and at the weekly service. Besides this, I have aimed to set forth prominently the great fundamental truths of God's way of salvation, to put clearly before you the being and character of God, the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ and of the Holy Spirit, and the characteristics of a true believer in Him. I have endeavored to teach and warn and exhort all classes, young and older, trying not to hide anything that I believed God's Word taught, and which was at the time profitable for you to hear. I have sought earnestly to show you, too, that *all* of God's Word is of service, and not merely such parts as some people often think to be so; and who hence call such parts practical, simply because such parts have reference to ourselves, or our own times or our present condition. Hence I have set before you God's purposes toward His Church in the future, which are so constantly presented in the Scripture as a power to lift us up above this present world, and to gird us with spiritual strength and to sanctify. And therefore I have taught you not only concerning the person and work of our Lord, but of His coming again and of His kingdom; the certainty of His kingdom which is to be established on this earth renewed; the future redemption and return of Israel and Israel's position in the earth; and, in general, of God's designs toward that people as set forth in the Scripture, and through them to all the nations of the earth. And I have endeavored to impress upon you the high and holy calling

of the Christian CHURCH as a separated people, chosen out of the world, set apart to a singular service, and appointed to a singularly glorious destiny—the glorified bride of God's dear Son—the fullness, or completion of Christ, to “sit with Him on His throne, as He also overcame and is seated with the Father upon His throne.”

As one looks back over a pastorate of thirty-six years, given into his hands by the Holy Ghost, who alone makes pastors overseers of the flock of God, none can tell, so well as *he* can tell himself, his failings; or know as *he* knows the deep humiliation which fills his soul, in the clear sight which he has (notwithstanding his consciousness of sincerity and integrity) of his weakness of endeavor, of his failures, of his probable mistakes, of his misuse or feeble use of opportunities, of his poor attainments, and of the poverty of the apparent fruits of his labors compared with what he feels they might have been. None can estimate him to be less than he judges himself to be. And it is the uplifting joy of the pastor's heart that he serves a Master so considerate, so ready to judge things with tender forbearance, and whose rewards will outreach all the hopes of his people.

At the same time he is bound to say that, in the midst of all this, he is conscious of having sought to know and to do God's will among you; and that his prayer for every one of you all has continually been that the Lord might save you and make you “perfect and complete in all the will of God, and preserve you unto His heavenly glory.” It is all gone by now—the teachings, the exhortations, the warnings, the encouragements, the prayers, the wrestlings, the tears—gone to meet us in the presence of the Lord, and the results fully known only to HIM. May “His mercy be meted out to us, both pastor and people, in that day!”

When I came here there were on the communion-roll 233 names, of which there were then on the ground 142; of these only three are now here, and the abodes of eleven others are unknown. Since my coming the number enrolled has risen to 900, or nearly 700 additional names, an average



of close upon twenty year by year. Of these between one-third and one-half have been added upon confession of their faith. There have been seasons, of course, when many more have been added than at other times. And during the last ten years the fruits, owing to our present circumstances, have been much less than in previous times. But the above is the average for the whole period. How many of these have left us to go up higher! And how many, still well remembered and well beloved, have gone out from us to become diligent workers for the Lord in other fields, and whom we still carry upon our hearts in prayer that they may be perfected in holiness and "kept by the power of God through faith unto the salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." As I look back over that roll, with what tender and varied remembrances is this holy place associated. Here have I seen many among you led to the Lord. Here have I seen your children, too, openly profess Christ. Here have I seen my own children and children's children brought to the Lord's table. How have I rejoiced here over every hearty movement in carrying on Christ's work in the congregation, or for the help of the Lord's cause at home or abroad! What joy have I had in every soul that has been earnest in the Lord's service! And so, too, how has my heart known its own bitterness by the backwardness or the coldness or the decline of any who have professed the name of Christ, and by those who have been insensible to all appeals and have never openly acknowledged their fealty to Him. As a matter of fact it is a cheering thought that during this long course of years we have had very few cases indeed of serious discipline by the Session. So far as we know, by far the larger part have walked becomingly and many heartily for the Lord. The Lord himself clear and cleanse us all, pastor and people, and forgive and own us according to that infinite love of His which is perfect and divine.

During these long years I have publicly spoken to you in the name of the Lord very much more than 5,000 times, with-



out including more than 1,000 addresses at prayer-meetings, or other religious gatherings, or the hundreds of funeral addresses. At the Lord's table, where we have often known such precious influences, we have sat together as a church nearly one hundred and fifty times. I have baptized 478 persons, of which just 50 were adults, baptized on profession of their faith. I have solemnized during my residence here 352 marriages; in some cases those of the parents and then of their children after them. I have attended 731 funerals; while, during the *whole* of my ministry, I have assisted in putting into the grave, one by one, considerably over 1,000 persons. Do you wonder that to an old minister life seems so very short?

There are to-day, notwithstanding all our changes, still on the ground or within a certain proximity (on the Heights, or in New York City), 121 communicants, or within about a score of the number who were on the ground when I came to this church, more than thirty-six years ago.

And now we must separate as pastor and people. A week ago last Tuesday, the Presbytery of Jersey City, in reply to my proposal and your acquiescence in the same under the circumstances, agreed to the severance of the bond which has so long bound us together.

I need not detail at length the reasons which have led to this change. For years both you and I have been looking forward to the removal of this congregation to other quarters as inevitable—the result of causes operating in all our large cities. For six or eight years, however, when I have spoken of it, you have found that you were not able to see where to betake yourselves and start afresh, and you were not ready to take the step of separating from each other as a congregation and seeking other church homes. Indeed this is even now one of the sorest parts of the present trial. Hence, for a decade past we have continued together, holding the building still.\* And you have, therefore, very liberally been subscribing, year by year, in advance, what was fore-

seen to be necessary to meet the following year's expenses. But now the point is reached where you are persuaded that it is hopeless to keep on in our present quarters. The departure of one family after another to other cities continues. And also, at last, the building itself is so much in need of repair as to make it necessary to take some decisive step—either to repair it, if the prospect of remaining here is at all hopeful, or to sell it and remove elsewhere, if a position not now occupied in the lower part of the city is to be secured. After much consideration by all concerned you have decided that it is hopeless to remain in our present quarters. True indeed it is, that there are still in communion with this church 178 persons. But of these, 39 are residing out of the city; 31 have gone to parts unknown, and have long been thus absent; and 6 have withdrawn to other communions. Our number is thus much reduced. True also it is, as I have already stated, that reckoning name by name, there are still actually on the ground and within a reasonable distance (although some of these only very rarely attend), 102 communicants. And there are 19 more residing either on the Heights, or in the city of New York, who occasionally come to our services, making in all 121 communicants. That is to say, that, with all our changes, there are, as already stated, still accessible, within 21 of the number of those who were on the ground when I came here thirty-six years ago. But then, this fact is accompanied with two great differences in the cases. In the first place, there was at that time a strong tide of population setting in upon this city who were in the habit of attending church; and secondly, these, for the most part, settled down quite near, or at any rate not at all remote from this centre. At present all this is changed. Our former communicants are leaving the city year by year, although we do gather in some to take their places; and besides, those who come, settle most generally in homes remote from this locality. It is true, also, that even as the case stands, the church is still fully strong enough in communicants and attendants to under-

take a new enterprise and life in some other and hopeful quarter of the city. But, as is well known, such a movement is precluded by the fact that there is no such place on this side of the Heights for us to resort to now. The positions within the limits of old Jersey City which we once might have occupied are now already taken; and to remove to the Heights at this time would be premature, and would also carry us away from the vicinity of those who now attend our services. All therefore judge it best to do as we have long foreseen must eventually be done, and as has now been agreed upon. It is a comfort that the flourishing Sabbath-school is to be continued. Under the efficient management of the present Superintendent and teachers, supplemented, we may hope, by the labor of others living in the neighborhood, it may possibly grow to something more.

I take this occasion to say, that in all this long pastorate I have met with constant tokens of kindness and friendship and respect from the youngest up to those who are oldest. In all our meetings of the Session, and since the earlier years of my ministry here, in all our intercourse with the Boards of Trustees, and with all the people of this charge, not one root of bitterness has sprung up to trouble and defile us—not a ripple of opposition to mar our harmony. What a cause for gratitude is this! Let us give thanks for it to God, who rules all hearts. And we close to-day, with, so far as I know, the heartiest love on both sides. All of us are sorry for this change in our relations, and also for our necessary removal from this our old habitation, where we have so long worshipped God together, and sat together at the Lord's table. At the same time, as was well observed by the President of the Board of Trustees at the congregational meeting held on last Wednesday evening, "*all of us are agreed that the steps now taken were the wisest to be taken.*" It is so thought also by the Presbytery. It is so judged by the friends of the church, far and near, so far as I have heard, however much they may regret the necessity for the change. Your own action in all this matter as a

church and congregation, and your past history as a church called forth warm words of praise in the recorded resolutions of the Presbytery as you heard read on Wednesday evening last. As to your thoughtful and generous care of myself in the future, this also deserves and has received from the Presbytery and from others hearty approval and commendation. And as to my being now largely set aside by this change from my usual work, let me say to you : Do not be concerned on this account. It is true that by God's great kindness I am still in good health and active, and am able to perform all the labors of the pastorate. But in my seventy-fourth year I could not expect to be, nor could you expect me to be, for any long time, actively useful. So that you may well believe that we have continued together, so far as that is concerned, as long as was suitable, and that we have agreed to the sundering of the tie which bound us together, only when, at the longest, it must, in the course of nature, have been sundered soon. It is a gracious providence of God which enables me to say that our relation to each other is to be sundered only by a felt necessity and with a mutual esteem and regret on both sides. As to my future oversight for you and my willingness to aid, in any way possible to me, your spiritual interests, for which you have expressed your desire to me and to the Presbytery, and to further which the Presbytery, at your request, has assigned me the position of Moderator of the Session of the church ; that is a matter of course. I need not dwell upon it. As Samuel said, in his old age, to Israel : "God forbid that I should sin against the Lord in ceasing to pray for you ; only fear the Lord and serve Him in truth with all your heart." For all the many tokens of kindness in words or acts which I or mine have received from you who are here or from those who were once of our number but are now gone elsewhere, I return my hearty thanks. May the Lord himself repay you.

The Sabbath-school, as I have said, is to be continued, and this congregation will, I doubt not, entertain a warm

interest in its success. Our hope is that it may, in some way, lead, in the nearer or more remote future, to a church with regular services in some part of the city, and may thus preserve the old name and organization. Our Superintendent and teachers will work, as far as possible, toward that end.

It is very pleasant to state that our old friends, the Consistory of the First Reformed Church in Grand Street, have very graciously accorded to the Sabbath-school the use of their building when this building shall have been sold. And this congregation, on Wednesday evening last, authorized the school to remove and use our lecture-room furniture for their accommodation.

As another act of Christian kindness, let me say, that through the rector of St. Matthew's Episcopal Church (Rev. Mr. Holbrook) our congregation has been offered the free use of their lecture-room on any particular occasion when this congregation may wish to hold meetings, upon any evening of the week except Wednesdays. We heartily acknowledge these graceful acts of Christian courtesy.

And now all is closed. As we stand here still, beloved, for a few moments longer as pastor and people, let me remind you that this change is but one incident *by the way*, of which there are so many occurring as time passes on. The *great* event is *beyond*. That will never pass away. That claims, as nothing here can claim, the heart's deep feelings and earnestness. Besides, let us not forget that whatever has been here well done will remain, notwithstanding all outside mutations. Other churches—even apostolic ones like those of Ephesus and Smyrna and Thyatira and Colosse—have gone, but the fruits of these remain forever, garnered by the Lord above. And so of this church, organized 44 years ago this very month, what a history and influence, known fully only to God, has the service of those 44 years achieved. These walls then may go, and other purposes be carried forward upon this now sacred site, yet the prayer, the faith, the love, the hope, the deeds of Chris-



tian endeavor here witnessed and here nourished will remain. They are with God. Oh! that He may keep us, to meet in that day, and gather eternally the fruits of our joint labors put forth under the influences of this sanctuary. Let us not forget, either, the solemn statement of the apostle Peter in the passage which I read to-day in your hearing: "The end of all things is at hand." "Why, then," (it has well been asked,) "need we dwell sorrowfully on these things which happen only on the way?" They are all plainly hastening away. The great reality is THERE—yonder: THE KING! THE COMING JUDGE! who shall give to every one according as his work shall be.

"Brief life is here our portion,  
 Brief sorrow, short-lived care;  
 The life that knows no ending,  
 The tearless life is there.  
 O happy retribution,  
 Short toil, eternal rest;  
 For mortals and for sinners,  
 A mansion with the blest."

"The morning shall awaken,  
 The shadows shall decay,  
 And each true-hearted servant  
 Shall shine as doth the day.  
 Then God, our King and portion,  
 In fullness of His Grace,  
 Shall we behold forever,  
 And worship face to face."

It is a noticeable coincidence brought unexpectedly to my recollection that this very day fifty years ago (April 29, 1838), I stood up to preach my first sermon. It was in a school-house near Princeton, New Jersey, when I was still a theological student. How well do I remember that scene—the long walk in the Sabbath evening to the place, the dim tallow-candles on the school desk used for a pulpit, the assembled audience sitting in the shadow, and the young preacher, timid and anxious, as he rose to publish his first



message of the Gospel of Christ. And now, just half a century later this very day, I close my long pastorate with you.

And now a closing word of exhortation :

First, To any who may yet be unsettled as to their choice of Christ.

Some of such may have heard my voice as their minister for years and years gone by. Others of them may still be young. Oh! you who have so long listened to heaven's music of invitation, and who, up to this very hour, have failed to be decided, still lingering on the other side with the unbelieving, rejecting world, what shall be the end for you *there, yonder*? Can it be possible that you will meet with Him only to be cast out? Must these years of ministry testify against you? By the love of God and His forbearance toward you, I beseech you to-day, harden your heart no longer. To-day believe and commit your soul to Christ and follow Him. And you who are *young*, and who yet also stand among the undecided; shall I fail, in parting, once more to speak to you, whom I have so often addressed, beseeching you to seek the Lord at once? I do it with tender importunity. Jesus Christ says to you, as to all: The way is open—so fully, widely open—to him who is ready to enter, that none can shut it against him. But it requires decision to enter it. "Strait is the gate and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it; because wide is the gate and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat." "He that layeth not down all that he hath and taketh not up his cross, cannot be His disciple." Oh! my young friend! have you decision enough to enter the gate now? Is the glory of heaven bright enough in your eyes to let the world go, and make sure of the life to come? "Him that believeth in Me and confesseth Me before men," says Christ, "I will confess in the presence of My Father and the holy angels." Once more you have life and death set before you. Will you fail, after all, of the grace of God!

Secondly, But to you who have confessed His name.

Some of you have long followed Him. You know by experience His faithfulness. He has led us thus far. He will never forsake you. Others of you are young as believers—in many cases children of the covenant, presented in baptism by your believing parents, and afterward, when arrived at years of sufficient knowledge, you have confessed Christ as your personal Redeemer. To you all I say: There is still a conflict; the battle yet rages; the “wicked spirits in high places,” of which the apostle speaks, always have access to us here. They are always full of malice and of cunning devices to entrap and lead us astray; always bent on overthrowing and ruining us. And they would surely and necessarily succeed but for our ever-present defense—God and His grace and His protection and His deliverance. *His* promise, *His* power, *His* faithfulness, are our rest and hope. Yes, the battle yet rages, nor will the fight be done until the Master calls you home. Remember then—and I speak now to all such present to-day, including the many who were once with us, but are now removed, and whose familiar faces we are all glad once more to behold in this assembly,—remember:

1. First: That it is the GRACE of God which saves you—free, unmerited, and most real *grace*. You are looked upon by the Father as standing in *Christ*; not in *yourselves*, and therefore as possessing by God’s grace what Jesus Christ has won for you; accepted of God in your persons and in your services rendered to Him. Oh! let *yourselves* go, I beseech you; let *yourselves* go; and let your thoughts ever turn to behold what you possess (according to God’s testimony) in *Christ*. HIS righteousness clothes you, and *it* has no spot—HIS cross has adjudged and atoned for and removed your sins forever, and has opened Heaven’s treasures to you. The Holy Spirit is yours and dwells in you because you are Christ’s and are *in Christ*. And abiding in Him, He ensures your preservation all the way through to eternal glory.

2. Remember next : That *God's* Word is your guide and not *man's* word. What great and persistent attempts are made in this day to set that Word aside, by theories professedly built on insubvertible foundations, but which vanish after about a score of years to give place to some new one. Oh ! keep that Word ever before you. Read it constantly and study it and teach it as the Word of the living God to your children. Begin every day by meeting God as He speaks to you in it, and speak you in prayer back again to Him. Let no man deceive you. You are begotten of the truth of God. You are nourished by God's truth. You grow in grace by growing in the knowledge of God's Son as the Word reveals Him. Be not, therefore, by any consideration drawn away from that Word, nor ever be tempted to undervalue it, or to doubt it, or to substitute other things for it as your guide. And never be content, I charge you, to listen to any religious teacher who doubts about it, or who ignores it, or who undervalues it, or who is willing to accept and teach only parts of it as God's Word, or who upholds his teachings by other considerations than that Word's divine authority from Heaven, "thus saith the Lord."

3. Remember next : Your position as one bought by Christ's own blood, and therefore as not your own, but belonging to Him, your Lord. And remember, too, the position of yourself and of His whole Church, in this life, as not of this world, but called by grace out of this world—separated from it, in spirit, in desires, in aims, in life—as a home, as an inheritance, as a country. Remember that your *real* life is a *hidden* life to the eyes of the world—a life really unknown by the men of the world and unrelished by them just so far as it is known ; a life that is hidden with Christ in God, and to be revealed in its glory only when the Lord comes. It is not a life which exhibits itself by its brilliant eminences of wealth or station or worldly honor here. It is not a life revealing its excellence and attractiveness by its dignities seen in this world, either in State or even in the

Church. It is not a life revealing itself by a shining social position, nor by its success in worldly schemes. It is a life whose greatness and glory and holiness, and its now unseen and unknown and inconceivable grounds of existence and its sublime realities, are yet to be revealed—a *hidden* life now—hidden with Christ in God, and revealed only when the Lord shall come (Col. iii. 1-4). I charge you, then, let all men see in you continually, and in all the relations of this present world and life, the spirit of "the pilgrim and stranger," whose aims and hopes are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God. While you are necessarily diligent in business, as Christ's servant, hold, I entreat you, hold everything here with a loose hand. And look and long for His coming when your true life shall at last be manifested; where your true citizenship, for which your "name is enrolled in Heaven," is to be realized; where you shall appear with Christ in glory.

4. Remember next: To labor for Him courageously; doing the work which He sets before you; doing little things or great things, hard work or easy work, as He in His providence calls you to engage in them. It is not so much the kind of work which you do for Him that is important as the manner in which the work is done. In any case "He is not unjust to forget your work and labor of love" for Him.

5. Remember, too: That HE is your stronghold, and not yourself. Walk with HIM; live in communion with HIM; follow HIM; wait for HIM—"God's Son, from heaven," to receive you to the place of rest.

So I commend you to "the Lord on whom you have believed." And may He, the faithful One, crown these years of ministry, for pastor and people, with His gracious approval, pardoning all that has been wrong; and owning with abundant grace all that, as the fruit of His guiding, strengthening Spirit, has been right; and bring us at last to stand together, pastor and people, in His own presence with abounding joy.

Then followed the closing prayer, after which the pastor proceeded, as follows :

As I have already stated,—At the meeting of the Presbytery of Jersey City, held in Passaic, New Jersey, April 17, 1888, it was agreed, on the application of your pastor, and with the acquiescence of the congregation, expressed through their Commissioners, that the pastoral relation between us should be this day dissolved, and this pulpit declared vacant.

THEREFORE, In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ the Head of the Church, and by the authority and direction of the Presbytery of Jersey City, acting for Him, I do now pronounce and declare that the pastoral relation which has existed since February 11, 1852, and up to the present time, between myself and this Presbyterian church and congregation of Jersey City, is now dissolved.

And may He who saves us by His grace, and is Lord of both shepherds and their flocks, have us ever in His holy keeping, and give us grace to maintain the battle manfully to the end, and bring us off more than conquerors through His love. And when He comes in His glory, then, whether we be among those who still are living or whether we be among those departed and sleeping in Jesus, may we live forever together with Him, and have an abundant entrance ministered to us into His heavenly kingdom. Amen.

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The congregation then rose and sang together the following hymn :

“Blest be the dear, uniting love,  
That will not let us part :  
Our bodies may far off remove ;  
We still are one in heart.

“Joined in one spirit to our Head,  
Where He appoints we go ;  
We still in Jesus’ footsteps tread,  
And show His praise below.

"Oh, may we ever walk in Him,  
And nothing know beside !  
Nothing desire, nothing esteem,  
But Jesus crucified !

"Partakers of the Saviour's grace,  
The same in mind and heart,  
Not joy nor grief nor time nor place  
Nor life nor death can part."

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The exercises were closed with the Benediction, and the  
Doxology,

"Praise God, from whom all blessings flow," etc.,

chanted by the choir.



TRUSTEES  
OF THE  
FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
OF  
JERSEY CITY, N. J.

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THE following list gives the names of the Trustees of the Church from the time of its organization, with the year of their election, up to the year 1888:

1844—March 5.

DUDLEY G. GREGORY,	LEWIS D. HARDENBURGH,
DAVID HENDERSON,	HENRY SOUTHMAYD,
OLIVER S. STRONG,	ERASTUS RANDALL,
HENRY M. ALEXANDER.	

1847—November 9.

JONATHAN D. MILLER,	JOSIAH H. GAUTIER, M.D.,
THOMAS H. AMIDON,	WM. A. TOWNSEND,
ABRAM S. JEWELL,	DAVID HENDERSON (2d).

1848—November 22.

LUKE C. LYMAN,	OLIVER S. STRONG.
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1849—November 22.

ABRAM S. JEWELL,	JOSIAH H. GAUTIER, M.D.
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1850—November 22.

J. D. MILLER,	WM. A. TOWNSEND,	DAVID HENDERSON (2d).
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**1851—November 22.**

LUKE C. LYMAN,

OLIVER S. STRONG.

**1852—November 22.**

ABRAM S. JEWELL,

J. H. GAUTIER, M.D.,

WM. T. RODGERS.

**1853—April 14.**

FREDERICK B. BETTS,

UZAL CORY,

WILLIAM R. JANEWAY,

B. B. GRINNELL,

EDWIN WYGANT,

J. W. PARKER,

J. W. BONNELL.

**1854—November 29.**

CHAS. FINK,

JAS. R. THOMPSON.

**1855—November 22.**

ANDREW CLERK,

ABRAM S. JEWELL.

**1856—November 21.**

CHAS. FINK,

J. W. PARKER,

JAS. R. THOMPSON.

**1857—November 20.**

F. B. BETTS,

WM. R. JANEWAY.

**1858—November 24.**

ABRAM S. JEWELL,

AUGUSTUS JENKINS.

**1859—November 24.**

CHAS. FINK,

J. W. PARKER,

JAS. R. THOMPSON.

**1860—November 21.**

F. B. BETTS,

W. R. JANEWAY.

**1861—November 22.**

BENJ. G. CLARKE,

J. R. SCHUYLER.

1862—November 22.

JAS. R. THOMPSON, JAS. L. OGDEN, BENNINGTON F. RANDOLPH.

1863—November 20.

HENRY W. BUXTON, H. A. COURSEN.

1864—November 25.

BENJ. G. CLARKE, J. R. SCHUYLER.

1865—December 1.

J. R. THOMPSON, J. L. OGDEN, B. F. RANDOLPH.

1866—December 12.

H. A. COURSEN, H. W. BUXTON, WALTER S. NEILSON.

1867—December 11.

B. G. CLARKE, THERON S. DOREMUS.

1868—December 16.

B. F. RANDOLPH, J. E. HULSHIZER, T. B. MEIGS.

1869—December 8.

H. W. BUXTON, WALTER S. NEILSON.

1870—December 7.

BENJ. G. CLARKE, THERON S. DOREMUS.

1871—November 8.

T. B. MEIGS, J. FLAVEL MCGEE, J. E. HULSHIZER.

1872—December 4.

H. W. BUXTON, WILLIAM HARNEY, WM. E. STIGER.

1873—January 28.

ABRAM S. JEWELL, WM. E. STIGER.

1873—November 5.

BENJ. G. CLARKE,

ABRAM S. JEWELL.

1874—November 11.

T. B. MEIGS,

J. F. MCGEE,

JAS. L. OGDEN.

1875—November 10.

J. A. KUNKEL,

W. E. STIGER,

H. A. COURSEN.

1876—November 8.

BENJ. G. CLARKE,

JOHN B. HUNTTING.

1877—November 7.

T. B. MEIGS,

H. A. COURSEN,

J. FLAVEL MCGEE.

1878—November 13.

J. A. KUNKEL,

HAMILTON WALLIS.

1879—November 5.

D. C. MCNAUGHTON,

WILLIAM EWAN,

JOHN B. HUNTTING,

CHAS. A. SOUTHMAYD,

A. SLAUSON.

1879—December 3.

CHAS. D. DAVIS.

1880—November 3.

CHAS. D. DAVIS,

JAMES R. HENRY,

A. SLAUSON.

1881—November 2.

W. D. GODLEY,

J. A. KUNKEL,

JOSEPH D. BEDLE.

1882—March 3.

WILLIAM RUNKLE,

GEORGE S. SMITH.

1882—November 8.

JOHN B. HUNTTING,

D. C. MCNAUGHTON.

1883—November 14.

WM. RUNKLE,                      GEORGE S. SMITH,                      J. FLAVEL MCGEE.

1884—November 12.

JOSEPH D. BEDLE,                      J. A. KUNKEL.

1885—November 25.

JOHN B. HUNTING,                      WM. MARTIN.

1886—November 26.

GEORGE S. SMITH,                      JOSEPH D. BEDLE, JR.,                      WM. D. GODLEY.

1887—November 23.

JOSEPH D. BEDLE,                      J. A. KUNKEL,                      W. J. MONTGOMERY.

The present Board of Trustees, July 1, 1888, are as follows :

Hon. JOSEPH D. BEDLE, <i>President.</i>	WM. MARTIN,
JNO. B. HUNTING, <i>Secretary and</i>	GEORGE S. SMITH,
<i>Treasurer.</i>	JOSEPH D. BEDLE, JR.,
J. A. KUNKEL,	WM. J. MONTGOMERY.

## HISTORY OF THE SUNDAY-SCHOOL OF THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, JERSEY CITY.

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ON the evening of the 13th day of May, 1844, the following persons assembled at the Lyceum in Grand Street for the purpose of organizing a Sunday-school to be connected with the First Presbyterian Church:

REV. JOHN JOHNSTONE, *Pastor.*

OLIVER S. STRONG, L. D. HARDENBURGH, and L. T. STOWELL,  
*Elders.*

LEBBEUS CHAPMAN,	MRS. JOHNSTONE,
BENJAMIN U. RYDER,	MRS. MARY F. STOWELL,
JOHN THOMPSON,	MISS LOUISA GREGORY,
JAMES MORRISON,	MISS CLARA GREGORY,
T. H. SHAFER,	MISS MARGARET HENDERSON,
WILLIAM RHODES,	MISS MARGARET JOHNSTONE,
E. C. BRAMHALL,	MISS MARY SHAFER.

A constitution was adopted and the following officers were elected:

LEBBEUS CHAPMAN,	. . . . .	<i>Superintendent.</i>
BENJAMIN U. RYDER,	. . . . .	<i>Librarian.</i>
WILLIAM RHODES,	. . . . .	<i>Secretary.</i>
E. C. BRAMHALL,	. . . . .	<i>Treasurer.</i>

It was also resolved, "That this Society become auxiliary to the New York Sunday-school Union." Upon this being done, the school was numbered 77 of the New York Sunday-school Union, and continued as such during the existence of that Union.

The school thus organized went into operation on the succeeding Sabbath with fourteen teachers and forty-five scholars.



All of the eighteen persons present at the first meeting have long since passed away from the church and Jersey City. At least eight are dead; probably more.

The school thus organized has continued in existence to the present time with certainly a fair degree of prosperity. The following statistics show the number on the rolls at different periods in its history as appears from annual reports:

1852.	27	Teachers and Officers,	178	Scholars;
1858.	37	"	"	222
1865.	38	"	"	179
1869.	37	"	"	198
1876.	32	"	"	237

showing thus an average number of about 175 to 200 scholars on the rolls, with a fair percentage of average attendance.

### Officers.

The records of the school were at first imperfectly kept, and the minutes of annual meetings and probable elections held in the years 1846, 1847, 1848, 1853, and 1854, are missing, so that there may be some omissions in the following lists; but, as far as the records show, the following have held offices:

### Superintendents.

LEBBEUS CHAPMAN, from May 13, 1844, for at least two years. (Three years' records missing.)

THOMAS H. SHAFER, from May 21, 1849, to November 6, 1853.

WILLIAM R. JANEWAY, from November 6, 1853, to November 5, 1855.

FREDERICK B. BETTS, from November 5, 1855, to May 9, 1860.

EDWIN WYGANT, from May 9, 1860, to November 20, 1861.

JULIUS S. HOWELL, from November 20, 1861, to May 14, 1872.

Rev. C. K. IMBRIE, D.D., from May 14, 1872, to November 12, 1876.

WILLIAM E. STIGER, from November 12, 1876, to date.

### Assistant Superintendents.

J. S. DAVENPORT, from May 21, 1849, to November 15, 1852.

EDWIN WYGANT, from November 15, 1852, to ———.

SAMUEL W. DAVENPORT, from November 5, 1855, to May 2, 1859.  
 Mrs. SLATER, from May 2, 1859, to May 9, 1862.  
 Miss LOUISA HARRIS (Mrs. CLERK), from May 9, 1862, to June 2, 1869.  
 Mrs. TALMAGE, from June 2, 1869, to May 18, 1870.  
 HORACE S. ALLEN, from May 18, 1870, to May 28, 1876.  
 Mrs. H. A. COURSEN, from March 21, 1873, to May —, 1874.  
 FLAVEL MCGEE, from November 12, 1876, to date.

### Treasurers.

E. C. BRAMHALL, from May 13, 1844, to April 12, 1845.  
 WILLIAM RHODES, from April 12, 1845, to ———.  
 WILLIAM BAYLEY, from April 21, 1849, to May 20, 1851.  
 LOUIS BONNELL, from May 20, 1851, to August 16, 1852.  
 T. S. HARRIS, from August 16, 1852, to ———.  
 S. D. SEELYE, from November 11, 1855, to May 5, 1856.  
 T. H. SHAFER, from May 5, 1856, to May 8, 1858.  
 A. JENKINS, from May 8, 1858, to May 2, 1859.  
 S. W. DAVENPORT, from May 2, 1859, to May 9, 1860.  
 JAMES R. HENRY, from May 9, 1860, to May 18, 1870.  
 A. C. TULLY, from May 18, 1870, to May —, 1876.  
 CHARLES F. IMBRIE, from May 28, 1876, to date.

### Secretaries.

WILLIAM RHODES, from May 13, 1844, to April 12, 1845.  
 L. CHAPMAN, Jr., from April 12, 1845, to ———.  
 J. T. SHAFER, from May 21, 1849, to May 20, 1851.  
 HENRY A. LYMAN, from May 20, 1851, to November 19, 1851.  
 F. F. BETTS, from November 19, 1851, to November —, 1854.  
 E. N. K. TALCOTT, from November —, 1854, to November 11, 1855.  
 S. D. SEELYE, from November 11, 1855, to February 22, 1856.  
 F. F. BETTS, from February 22, 1856, to May 4, 1857.  
 J. H. THOMAS, from May 4, 1857, to May 8, 1858.  
 JAMES R. HENRY, from May 8, 1858, to May 18, 1870.  
 A. C. TULLY, from May 18, 1870, to May —, 1876.  
 JAMES R. HENRY, from May 28, 1876, to date.

### Librarians and Assistants.

The following have at different times and for longer or shorter periods served in this capacity :

BENJAMIN U. RYDER,	DAVID DOWNER,
S. LYNCH,	CHARLES H. JAQUITH,
JOHN H. LYON,	WILLIAM E. STIGER,
JACOB FISHER,	WILLIAM T. HENRY,
JAMES THOMPSON,	JOHN K. DURYEE,
FREDERICK F. BETTS,	HORACE J. JAQUITH,
J. T. SHAFER,	J. B. BETTS,
CALVIN SHAFER,	EDWARD LINN,
E. N. K. TALCOTT,	JACOB FARLEE,
J. CLARKE,	HENRY WILLIAMS.
J. H. THOMAS,	JAMES HENRY,
HOWARD SLATER,	WILLIAM M. IMBRIE,
HUGH H. JANEWAY,	CHARLES L. FINK,
JAMES T. B. COLLINS,	CHARLES TALMAGE,
THOMAS L. JANEWAY.	

The school has usually been divided into one or more older Bible-classes, the classes meeting in the general school-room, and an infant class.

The teachers of the infant class have been :

Mr. S. W. DAVENPORT.

Miss HANNAH J. ROY.

Mrs. CATALINA TALMAGE, for many years and still in service.

Mrs. DAVID DOWNER, for a short time.

Mrs. H. W. BUXTON, during last year, having boys only.

The hour of meeting has been usually at 2 or 2.30 P.M.

The studies pursued in the general classes were for several years in the Union Question-Books, and also Scripture Question-Books for younger scholars, and part of the time without Question-Books.

Since the adoption of the International Series of Lessons they have been used in the school. Particular attention has been also paid to the Assembly's Shorter Catechism.

A library has always been maintained, usually containing some 500 or 600 volumes.

But little attention was paid to singing in the school until about 1862, since which time the school has occupied about half an hour of each session in singing, under the leadership of Mr. H. W. Buxton. The books used have

been "The Golden Chain," "Happy Voices," "Silver Spray," and "Christian Songs."

A system of merit tickets and rewards was in use until about 1850, when it was abolished. During the last year rewards have been given for committing the Catechism and parts of the lessons, and a reward to Miss Mary Black for committing the Gospel of John.

As the school belonged to the New York Union for several years, it was accustomed to proceed to New York on the Anniversary occasions and join with the New York schools in the celebration. This continued until 1852, when it was determined to unite the Jersey City schools in the celebration of an Anniversary at home. Accordingly, through the efforts of the officers of this school, all the schools of Jersey City assembled in this church to hold an Anniversary. Since then these celebrations have been continued annually, until now usually some eight churches are opened and many thousands parade. Mr. A. S. Jewell and Mr. F. B. Betts were the most prominent persons in originating these Anniversaries.

Christmas celebrations have been held for four years past.

The present pastor was accustomed to preach to the children on the first Sabbath of every month until he became Superintendent, when those special services were discontinued.

Teachers' meetings for study of the lessons, and special prayer-meetings, have been held at different times for longer or shorter periods; also various missionary meetings at different times.

As a nursery for the church, the school has borne a prominent part. It is impossible for me with the materials at my command to give the exact number of those who have united with the church while connected with the school, but that number is large. Very few years have passed without some such additions, and in some years the number has been, I think, as high as 20.

### Mission Work.

The school, while thus engaged in its own quiet work, has also largely participated in mission work, and this may be divided into mission work at home in Jersey City, and work outside of the city, both in the United States and in foreign fields. And—

1st. As to mission work in Jersey City.

Early in the history of the school an effort was made to visit that part of Jersey City in the neighborhood of the school, and draw in those not attending any Sabbath-school. Systematic efforts in this respect have been several times repeated with good results, and might, perhaps, be now advantageously renewed, although the ground has been partially occupied by others. Our school was at first composed almost entirely of children whose parents belonged to the congregation. This has changed to a very great extent, and for the last few years the majority of the scholars have probably been from families not connected with this church. Among those brought in at different times we may mention a number of children residing on canal-boats moored in the canal basin during the winter. Some of these children returned to us for two or more successive winters, being absent in the summer.

A Sunday-school was conducted in the old Almshouse at the foot of Washington Street for several years by Mrs. C. L. Fink, and other members of our church, which might be considered as a branch of our school. This was continued until the removal of the inmates to Snake Hill made it necessary to abandon this enterprise.

A mission-school of the former Young Men's Christian Association, prior to 1858, was largely supported by members of this church. The school of the Children's Home was also mainly conducted by our church members until the removal of the Home to the Heights.

Contributions have at different times been made to other mission-schools in this city and vicinity, and to the city missions.

A German mission-school, under the superintendency of Mr. John Ullmer, has been for several years held in our rooms in the morning, many of the scholars attending our own school in the afternoon.

In the year 1863 a mission-school was established in a small room at the corner of Grove and York Streets, with Hon. B. F. Randolph as superintendent; Mr. Amerman, assistant superintendent; and J. R. Henry as secretary and treasurer. This school was held at 9 A.M., and continued for some months with an attendance of 25 or 30 scholars. The room, however, was small and inconvenient, and no other could be obtained. It was, therefore, determined to discontinue. Several of the scholars were transferred to the main school, which some of them continued to attend until a recent period; others went to other schools.

2d. As to mission work abroad.

Regular contributions have been made to the Presbyterian Boards of Foreign and Domestic Missions, \$50 per annum being given to each for many years. From the moneys contributed to the Foreign Board at least two children were educated in China, one named John Johnstone, after our first pastor, and one a female. Recently, as is well remembered, the son of our pastor, Rev. William Imbrie and his wife, both long connected with our school, have gone as missionaries to Japan. A communion service has just been promised by us to be presented to the Presbyterian Church of Tokio, Japan.

In 1864, under the superintendency of Mr. J. S. Howell, a Sunday-school was established, by contributions from us, at Genoa, Minnesota, and called the Imbrie Mission. About the same time we began to contribute toward the salary of Mr. W. Hatch, a missionary of the Am. S. S. Union in Minnesota, and some other missionaries. At present we contribute toward the support of Rev. Mr. Lewis, a missionary in the same State. Under these gentlemen a number of Sunday-schools were established in Minnesota, aided partly



by us by supplies of books, papers, etc. By a report made at our Anniversary in 1869, there were then in existence of these schools the following :

1. Imbrie Mission, at Genoa ;
2. Talmage Mission, at Oak Glen ;
3. Henry Mission, at Harper's School-House ;
4. School at Goodhue Centre ;
5. Trio Mission, at Fairport ;
6. Barker Mission ;
7. (Name unknown.)
8. School at Leavenworth ;
9. Meigs Mission ;
10. Jewell Mission,

and some seven others, whose names and locations were unknown ; some aided by us as a school, and some by individuals in this and other churches. Others have been organized since. Precisely how many of these are still in existence, I am unable to state. I believe we aid none now specially.

Boxes of books, papers, hymn-books, etc., have been sent to these and other schools at different times, also boxes of clothing to the above and other missionaries.

I have thus endeavored to put together a few of the principal facts in regard to the history of our school. May the record of what we have accomplished in the past inspire us to greater effort in the future.

JAMES R. HENRY, *Secretary.*

JERSEY CITY, *February*, 1877.

Continuing the above history from 1877, the following have been the officers of the school :

### Superintendents.

WILLIAM E. STIGER, — to September 29, 1878.

FLAVEL MCGEE, September 29, 1878, to January 11, 1880.

HENRY W. BUXTON, January 11, 1880, to May 12, 1880.

JAMES R. HENRY, May 12, 1880, to April 30, 1882.

FLAVEL MCGEE, April 30, 1882, to —, 1883.

H. O. HUNTTING, June 8, 1884, to January 1, 1887.

JOHN C. PARSONS, January 1, 1887, to date.

### Assistant Superintendents.

FLAVEL MCGEE, — to September 29, 1878.

TITUS B. MEIGS, May 3, 1879, to May 12, 1880.

JOHN LINN, May 12, 1880, to April 30, 1882.

Miss S. WALDRON, April 30, 1882, to June 14, 1885.

Miss SOPHIE MESCHUTT, June 14, 1885, to June, 1886.

JOHN C. PARSONS, June, 1886, to January 1, 1887.

O. R. BLANCHARD, June 5, 1887, to date.

### Secretaries.

JAMES R. HENRY, — to May 12, 1880.

H. O. HUNTTING, April 30, 1882, to June 8, 1884.

HARRY PLATT, June 8, 1884, to June 14, 1885.

WILLIAM M. SMITH, June 14, 1885, to April 29, 1888.

J. E. HULSHIZER, Jr., April 29, 1888, to date.

W. A. MARTIN, Assistant Secretary, 1888.

### Treasurers.

CHARLES F. IMBRIE, — to June, 1886.

GEORGE S. SMITH, June, 1886, to date.

And the following

### Librarians or Assistants.

JACOB FARLEE,	GEORGE S. SMITH,	PHILIP F. MESCHUTT,
THOMAS DOREMUS,	JOHN OLENDORF,	WILLIAM M. SMITH,
R. SHARPE KUNKEL,	JAS. L. OGDEN, JR.,	WILLIAM RITCHIE,
	SANFORD E. SMITH.	

The school has been continued with some decrease in the number of teachers, but about the average of scholars. The Annual Report for 1881 showed on roll 24 officers and teachers, and 166 scholars. This was increased in 1882. In 1886, 27 teachers and officers and 180 scholars were reported.

The last Report was about 25 officers and teachers, and about 200 scholars, with an average attendance of about 165.

The studies pursued have been the International Lesson Series, using the publications of the Presbyterian Board.

The infant class has been under the management of Mrs. Talmage, recently deceased; Miss Bettine Wines, Mr. John B. Huntting, and Miss Mary Wallace.

The singing has been conducted by Mr. H. W. Buxton, Mr. C. D. Davis, Mr. Wm. Runkle, Mr. Geo. Smith, and Mr. Wm. Smith. A Sunday-school choir was organized in 1887; "Spiritual Songs for the Sunday-school" was introduced as the music-book in 1881.

Teachers' meetings have been maintained during part of the time. The entertainment feature has not been forgotten, and the school has joined in the general Anniversaries, and held Easter and Christmas services, of which those of 1887 were the most noticeable, and has had some other entertainments. From 1878 to 1882 Certificates of Honor were given to those bringing in new scholars, and for the last three years prizes to those absent not more than twice during a year.

While there has perhaps been no season of special religious interest, yet during all these years but few have passed without some from the school uniting with the church.

The church having decided to discontinue its services, the school, at a meeting held April 29, 1888, decided that it would continue, and elected the following officers:

JOHN C. PARSONS,	.	.	.	<i>Superintendent.</i>
O. R. BLANCHARD,	.	.	.	<i>Assistant Superintendent.</i>
J. E. HULSHIZER, Jr.,	.	.	.	<i>Secretary.</i>
W. A. MARTIN,	.	.	.	<i>Assistant Secretary.</i>
GEORGE S. SMITH,	.	.	.	<i>Treasurer and Librarian.</i>
SANFORD E. SMITH,	{	.	.	<i>Assistant Librarians.</i>
WILLIAM RITCHIE,				
WILLIAM M. SMITH,	.	.	.	<i>Chorister.</i>
Miss MARY WALLACE,	.	.	.	<i>Teacher of Infant Class.</i>

And at a meeting held May 6, 1888, the name of the school was changed to "The Imbrie Sunday-school," under which name it has continued to meet in the old church building, with about the same number of teachers and scholars.

Here, then, we close the record. The old school has passed away. Its work is done. It is now about thirty-one years since the writer first entered it ; more than thirty since he first became its Secretary. Of the 259 persons whose names are on the first roll made up by him in 1858, only two now remain in the school—Mrs. Mary Johnston and the writer. Looking back over that long period we can but give thanks to God for the good that we know has been accomplished by the old school, and hope that His blessing may continue to rest upon its successor.

JAMES R. HENRY.

JERSEY CITY, *October*, 1888.













